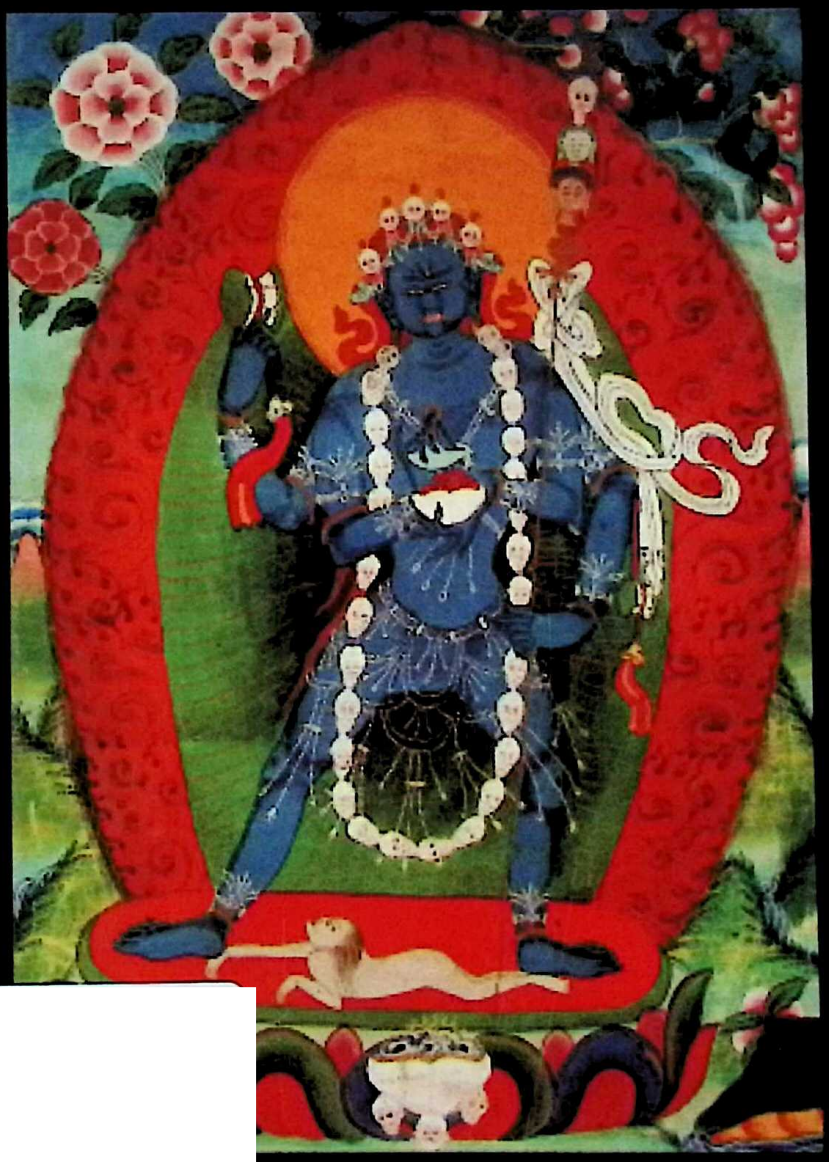
TANTRIK
LITERATURE AND CULTURE

Hermeneutics & Expositions



Edited by:

Andrea Loseries

Rabindranath Tagore, the founder of Visva-Bharati, favored learning on Buddhism through languages like Sanskrit, Pali, Chinese and Tibetan. In Santiniketan the invitation of Sylvain Levi in 1921 is termed as the starting of Buddhist Studies at Visva-Bharati. Rabindranath Tagore himself was a student in the classes of Professor Levi in the early twenties of the past century, along with M.V. Shastri and P.C. Bagchi.

The Centre for Buddhist Studies, Visva-Bharati, was launched in 2007 under the Scheme of Social Epoch Making Thinkers of the University Grants commission. The activities of the Centre (CBS) are class lectures in form of certified Training programs on Buddhism as well as specialized classes on Buddhist cultures and languages of Mongolia (2010-11), Bhotia (Ladakh 2011-12, Sikkimese 2012-13, Dzongkha 2013-14), as well as Pali and Buddhist Sanskrit; Special Lectures Series (Buddhist Art and Architecture 2011-12), International Seminars with special focus on research on Prajnaparamita and medivial Tantrik Literature in the Indo-Tibetan Interface, Film Shows and exhibitions.

Tantrik Literature and Culture
Hermeneutics & Expositions

Proceedings of the 6th International Csoma de Körös Symposium
Kolkata/Santiniketan March 2009

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&
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Cover Image: Yāminī, The Armor Godess of the Hear of Vajravārāhī

Yāminī is one of Six Armor Godesses *(Go cha'i dpa'mo drug)* visualized during the Sādhana practice of Cakrasamvara. They emanate from the body of Vajravārāhī *(rDo rje phag mo)*, who acts as the psycho-physical consort of the Heruka. Yāminī resides in the heart of Vajravārāhī. She is dark blue in colour and naked, apart from bone ornaments consisting of a skull crown, a girdle, six rings, a chest band, as well as a long necklace of fifty skulls. She has four arms. She hold in her right hand a Damaru which vibrant sound evokes the bliss-void ecstasy experienced in the sexual union with her consort Vajrasattva, one of Six Armor Heroes, here represented symbolically in the form of the katvaṇga staff in her upper left arm. In her lower hands she holds a hook knife, the symbol of means (upāya), and the blood-filled skull cup, the symbol of wisdom (prajñā) in the gesture of unification. The Yoginī stands with both feet on a female corpse, symbolizing her conquest of dualistic mind, on top of a sun disc and a lotus seat. At her feet a tripod of three human skulls supports a Kapāla that contains the Five Meats and the Five Nectars *(sha lnga bdud rtsi lnga)*, boiled and transformed into wisdom nectar and offered before Yāminī. As Armor Goddess of the Heart of Vajravārāhī she embodies unchangeable bliss-void.

Thanka
Tibet, 18th cent.
Gallery Joachim Baader, Munich

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Editor

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PROF. RAJAT KANTA RAY

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A Note on Tantrik Literature and Culture – Hermeneutics and Expositions

Tantrism is a discipline which has a double cradle: (1) India, and (2) Tibet. At the same time it is a subject of world wide interest, especially in Europe. The figure of Csomo de Koros is inconceivable without this world wide interest.

Tantrism originated late in India's history. One of the earliest Sanskrit texts I am aware of in this context is Bhavabhuti's *Malati Madhava,* which is a text of late antiquity. Soon after its appearance in India, mainly in the *Sahajiya* and *Vajrayana* schools of thought in Buddhism, Tantrism spread to Tibet. This process of expansion apparently took place between the 7th and 11th centuries.

Soon afterwards, the Muslim expeditions to Bihar and Bengal led to the decline of Tantrik Buddhism in Eastern India. From the warm Gangetic plains, it then took shelter in the cold desert beyond the Himalayas. It is still a living faith in Tibet. It is an object of world wide curiosity, especially in Europe during & after the nineteenth century. Hence the phenomenon of Csoma de Koros.

I welcome this important publication on Tantrism and Csomo de Koros. The Indo-Tibetan Department of Visva-Bharati and the Asiatic Society of Bengal jointly organized a very important seminar and out of its proceedings we now have this book. The credit belongs primarily to Professor Andrea Loseries and the Asiatic Society scholars.

I am happy to be associated with this scholarly venture.

RKRay

(Rajat Kanta Ray)

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ANDREA LOSERIES

Introduction to the Theme

Tantra[1] (Skr.; 'continuum', 'connection', 'fabric'; Tib. *rGyud)* along with the Vedas, the Upaniśad, the Purānas and the Bhagavad-Gītā is part of the Sanātana-Dharma, the 'eternal religion' of Hinduism. Its central theme is divine energy (śakti) personified as Devī or goddess, the female divine aspect represented as the consort of Śiva, taking up various manifestations, peaceful such as Lakşmī, Sarasvatī, Umā and Gaurī, or wrathful like Kālī and Durgā, and their union with Śiva.

It also defines unorthodox Tantrik writings and practice instructions that are only to be known and practiced by those persons who are willing and capable to undergo a strict spiritual discipline unless they may take serious harm.

In Hindu tradition two main Tantrik schools have emerged: the dangerous 'Left Hand Path' (Vāmācāra) involving liberal feasts, and the 'Right Hand Path' (Dakśināācāra) involving purifying rituals, spiritual discipline and absolute devotion to the Divine Mother.

Each Tantra treats five main subjects: the creation of the world, its dissolution, the adoration of the deity in its in female or male aspect, the achievement of supernatural powers, and various Yogic methods for realizing union with the Highest such as Bhakti-yoga, Kuṇḍalinī etc.

The Tantrik treatises are mostly composed as dialogues between Śiva and Śakti, aiming at awakening the cosmic power (Kuṇḍalinī-Śakti) through various meditations. For the rituals five items are essential: wine (madya), meat (māmsa), fish (matsya), mystical gestures and roasted wheat (mudrā) and sexual intercourse (maithuna).[2]

In Tibetan Buddhist Traditions the term Tantra *(rGyud)* is used to define various cult and texts such as medical and astrological writings and meditations systems generally defined as Vajrayāna, a system of teaching revealed by Buddha Sākyamuṇi in his manifestation as Dharmakāya. It is a system that is strongly based on human experience and describes the spiritual development in the categories of base *(gzhi)*, path *(lam)* and fruit *('bras bu)*, the base being the practitioner who uses the path for purifying the base in order to achieve the fruit, which is the result of his practice.

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1. The following description is based on the entrance 'Tantra' in: Lexikon der östlichen Weisheitslehren. Scherz Verlag Bern. München, Wien 1986 (4th Sonderauflage 1997)
2. For an Introduction to Hindu Tantra see Bharati, A.: *Tantrik Traditions.* Delhi 1993 (2nd rev. ed.)

The Tibetan tradition speaks of mainly four Tantra classes: Kriyā-Tantra (*bya ba'i rgyud*), Cārya-Tantra *(spyod pa'i rgyud)*, Yoga-Tantra *(rnal byor gyi rgyud)* and Anuttara-Tantra *(bla na med pa'i rgyud)*, depending on the various levels of spiritual capacities of a practitioner. The most important Anuttara-Tantras are Guhyasamāja-Tantra, Cakrasamvara, Hevajra, Kālacakra etc.

The 'old' Tantras of the *rNying ma pa* School differentiate Anuttara-Tantra into Mahā-, Anu- and Ati-Yoga *(rDzogs chen)*. Basis of the *rNying ma* Tantrik practice system is the acceptance of the fundamental purity of mind. One of the most eminent Tantras of this tradition is Guhyagarbha-Tantra *(gSang ba'i sNying po'i rGyud)*.

The main feature of these systems is the thinking in polarities involving subtle sexual symbolism for the dissolution of duality by the union of Upāya *(thabs)*, method, as the male principle, with the female principle of wisdom Prajňā *(shes rab)*.[3]

At the time of the Indian Siddha tradition there was no rigid boundary or distinction between Hindu and Buddhist Tantrik adherents, as both introduced a body of scriptures called Tantras for which they claimed divine revelation. And it is the skillful synthesis of diverse elements of Indian culture that gave Tantrik Buddhism its vigor and viability. Tantrik Buddhists encountered their Hindu counterparts at cremation grounds and pilgrimage places, yogis and yoginīs of mainly śakta and śaivite traditions.[4]

One of the earliest Yoginī Tantras is the Hevajra Tantra, which dates from approximately the eighth century. It was found by Saroruha and commented by the Mahāsiddha Kanha (or Krişṇacārya) in the text called Yogaratnamālā, written in the ninth century.[5] Krişṇacārya is listed among the 84 Buddhist Mahāsiddhas[6] and was a progenitor of the Kaula school of Tantra. In his Cārya songs[7] he proclaims himself to be a Kapālika Yogi. Kāṇhā also is a revealer

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3. As for an Introduction to the History of Tantra see also: White, David Gordon: Tantra in Practice. Delhi 2001: Introduction 3-40; on Tibetan Tantra see Hopkins, Jeffrey: Tantra in Tibet. Boston 1987; Bhattacharya, N.N. (Ed.): Tantric Buddhism. New Delhi 1999 et al.
4. See in detail Loseries, Andrea: Yogini and Dakini. A Critical Analysis. In: Rai, Supriya (Ed.): Buddhist Culture in Asia. Unity in Diversity. Vol II, Mumbai 2008:215 - 223
5. See Snellgrove, D.L.: The Hevajra Tantra. A Critical Study. Part 1 and 2, London 1959; Farrow, G.W. & I. Menon: The concealed essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the commentary of the Yogaratnamala, Delhi 1992
6. Abhayadattsri: Caturashitisiddha-pravritti. Robinson. J.S.: Buddhas Lions. The Lives of the eighty four Siddhas. Berkeley 1979. See also the translation of Dowman, Keith: The Legends of the 84 Mahasiddhas. Albany 1985
7. *Caryagiti* and *Dohakosa* by P.C. Bhagchi, Santiniketan 1935

of the Cakrasamvara Tantra, so is Luipa[8], who is most probably identical with Matsyendranātha, the teacher of the famous Gorakhanātha. Therefore the influence of the 84 Mahāsiddhas in the existing Hindu Tantrik schools such as the Nātha Yogis, the Aughoris and Bāuls, should not be underestimated.[9]

The Tantrik tradition of Tibet survived the Buddhist Diaspora and the aftermath of King Langdarma's reign (9th century) in the - according to later Tibetan Buddhist hagiographers – 'infamous' non-monastic *snags pa* tradition, the 'Mantra holders', who - in the voice of later monastic hagiographers - were subject to evil spells and unconventional practices.[10] This took a turn with the second spread of Buddhism in Tibet, under the auspices of the Indian Pandit Atīśa Dīpamkāra (11th century), who invited to West Tibet, inaugurated a movement of coming back to the roots of Mahāyāṇa and the ideal of Bodhisattva, meaning correct livelihood and being a good and subordinate subject to the state government. The conflation of the monastic Mahāyāna and the non-celibate Tantrik paradigms required explicit synthesis. In the later centuries, under the influence of the *bKa' dam pa* School and with the institutionalization of monasticism, supported by the adaptation of the reincarnation system *(sprul sku)* from the 12th century onwards[11], ritual behavior patterns started to change dramatically, a movement to be continued till now in exile.

All Tibetan Tantrik transmission lineages, alive and unbroken till date, derived from illustrious Indian Masters and Mahāsiddhas, many of them were from Bengal. In contemporary Bengal itself Tantra is still practised at the śmaśānas of the great pīṭha sites, while some aspects of Tantrik traditions were absorbed into more moderate spiritual movements, focusing on bhakti, such as Vaiśnavism.

Generally in Tibetan tradition it is said, the pre-requisite for Tantra practice are a profound experience of the Void through meditative and analytical insight, a thorough renunciation of worldly attachments and deep and boundless compassion for all living beings. Thus matured one may find an impeccable master who holding the transmission of an unbroken lineage has realized the teachings and is willing to transmit gradually the complete empowerments, authorizations and individual instructions to a committed disciple with unshakeable devotion and faith. During the time of training the disciple has to prove himself by undergoing strenuous preliminaries, long solitary reclusions and repeated challenges, examinations and a personal

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8. See Dawa Samdup, Kazi: *Sri Cakrasamvara Tantra.* New Delhi 1987 (1919)
9. See Farrow & Menon 1992:xi
10. See f.i. *Grub mtha' shel gyi me long* by Thu'u bKan Chos kyi Nyi ma
11. with Karma Pakshi, the second Karmapa: see Douglas, N. & M. White: Karmapa. The black Hat Lama of Tibet. London 1976

initiation by his or her master. Of greatest value for proceeding on the path without failure are the sacred commitments (samaya)

It is said that the Path of the Secret Mantras or Vajrayāṇa is short – one may reach enlightenment within one, at the latest within three life times only. But it is as sharp as a razor blade one balances on at the peak of a glacier. One is sure to fall to death in one single moment of distraction. There are Fourteen Root Tantrik Vows, eighteen Secondary and two additional secondary Tantrik Vows to be held. Exposing the secrets of Tantra to those who are not initiated is the seventh Root Down fall.

How and why can we discuss this profound and sacred vehicle for enlightenment bound to the oath of secrecy in an academic forum?

Basically, despite or because of pioneer translations of Tantrik texts and commentaries in the mid-fifties of the last century or earlier such as Hevajratantra, Guhyasamāja, Cakrasamvara, Kālacakra to name a few, they have been mainly misunderstood and misinterpreted as perverse esoteric cults. It was only in the aftermath of the Tibetan holocaust in the late 60ies that realized and learned masters from the sacred Snowland Tibet started to spread the teachings of their Tantrik lineages to an ever-growing number of disciples from all corners of the world. Under their direct and indirect guidance large numbers of scholarly papers have been written, grand translations projects have started and the subtlest of secret instructions have been published and are available at conventional and virtual book sales, well to be distinguished from the remixed cocktails of new age writings.

There is an ever-growing need for correct and authentic preservation, translation and interpretation of Tantrik Literature and culture at this time, in our global village. The responsibility is ours.

However, is our pursuit, academically and practically, based on the right motivation? Do we have the same pure motivation as the great Bodhisattva Indian Pandits and Tibetan Lotsavas had when they started one of the greatest ventures of human history in translating the entire Buddhist Canon into Tibetan within a few centuries only? Will we be able to keep the sacred teachings of the Secret Mantras undefiled by proper commitments, the right insight, compassion, endurance, and patience?

Why at this time the most conventional masters openly reveal the utmost secret teachings?

And is there a need for the teachings and practice of Tantra in this third millennium? Is there a need to preserve and translate twilight scriptures listing Mantras for subduing Nāgas and demons or attracting sexual partners, describing orgies that not anymore shock the world?

Yes indeed, the masters will say. At this particular time, at the end of the teaching period of Buddha Sākyamuṇi, when the defilements and passions of the beings have grown to such an extent that the outer and inner world are falling into darkness and disaster, the Tantrik instructions will be the only suitable means for liberation – effective, fast and most powerful – especially for women, here and now.

Recently I had the opportunity to ask H.H. Dalai Lama in a plenum session of an international conference held at Sarnath[12] of his opinion on translating the Vajrayāna texts contained in the Tibetan Canon *(bka' 'gyur* and *stan 'gyur)*. He answered that this 'open secret' has brought much misunderstanding. Whoever deals with these categories of texts should first understand properly the intrinsic meanings of the teachings of the 17 Pandits of Nālandā, and also look at the commentaries on the Tantras written by Indian masters such as Nāgārjuna or Āryadeva on Guhyasamāja as well as the explanations given by Tibetan masters. Milarepa has received direct teachings from his Master Marpa. None of us is able to follow his example and have the same determination. And Doha literature is addressed to individual practitioners only.

This volume presents selected papers presented at the 6th International Csoma de Koros Symposium on 'Hermeneutics of Tantrik Literature and Culture' (13th – 15th March 2009) organized by the Department of Indo-Tibetan Studies and the Centre for Buddhist Studies, Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan, The Asiatic Society, Kolkata, and the Csoma de Kőrős Society, Hungary.

At that occasion scholars from Hungary, Austria, Germany, Australia, Japan, Belgium, Korea, Russia, Nepal and India gathered for a three days Seminar in Santiniketan and at the Asiatic Society, Kolkata, where the great Hungarian Tibetologist Alexander Csoma de Kőrős (1784-1842) worked as an honorary Member and Librarian for more than ten years.

Csoma de Kőrős' pioneer work and research in the field of Indo-Tibetan Studies may have also enticed Rabindranath Tagore, the founder of Visva-Bharati, to favor learning on Buddhism through languages like Sanskrit, Pāli, Chinese and Tibetan. In Santiniketan the invitation of Sylvain Levi in 1921 is termed as the starting of scientific studies on Indo-Tibetan Studies at Visva-Bharati. Rabindranath Tagore himself was a student in the Tibetan classes of Professor Levi in the early twenties of the past century, along with M.V. Shastri and P.C. Bagchi.

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12. International Conference on *Tengyur Translations – In the Tradition of the 17 Pandits of Nalanda*, organized by the Central University of Tibetan Studies, Sarnath, Varanasi, and American Institute of Buddhist Studies, New York, 8th–11th January 2011

For this reason as well as Rabindranath Tagore's legendary avowal of India's 'emotional kinship' with Hungary (1926)[13], Prof. Geza Bethlenfalvy, the flagship of the Csoma de Kőrős Society and long time Research Fellow of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest, that is the cradle of Tibetology in the Western World, enticed me to convene the 6th International Symposium in honor of Csoma de Kőrős at Kolkata and Santiniketan.

Ergo, following the intention of Gurudeva Rabindranath Tagore who intended Santiniketan to be a place 'where the world becomes one nest', in the spring of 2009 scholars and practitioners from Eastern and Western learning and methodology gathered here for an informal meeting on 'Hermeneutics of Tantrik Literature and Culture' mingling with local Bauls admidst Santiniketan's indescribable beauty and artistic excellence.

This volume contains selected papers presented at this memorable Symposium, as well as additional articles to complement the topic.

Geza Bethlenfalvy's 'Beginning of Tantrik Studies: The Works of Csoma de Kőrős' embodies the key note address he has held at the time of the Inauguration in the Vidya Sagar Hall of The Asiatic Society, Kolkata, as the Vice President of the Csoma de Kőrős Society.

The contribution of Prem Saran, a Tantrik initiate and representative of the 'intellectual tradition' of the Indian civil service, who was prevented from presenting his paper on the global outreach of Tantra at the day of the inauguration due to his administrative preoccupation in the Indian Government, centers on the Indian play ethic and Tantra as counter culture.

Chandra Naik as a Dr. Ambedkar philosopher contributes his conception of Tantrik hermeneutics.

The renowned Advaita Vedantist and Śankarācārya specialist Minati Kar plays on the concept of Devī and its application in Kuṇḍalinī Yoga.

Bhikkhu Prajnalankar reveals the 'Lamp of Enlightenment' as expounded by Dīpamkāra Atīśa, while Madhu Khanna, the *grande dame* in interpreting cosmic order, describes the Journey of Tārā.

Buddhadev Bhattacharya mirrors the local colorit of the Virācāri Tantrik practice of Nimba-Vāsinī.

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13. See Mukherjee, Hirendranath: The Great Tibetologist Alexander Csoma de Koros. Hermit-Hero from Hungary, New Delhi 1984 (1981):1

Suniti Kumar Pathak, the great inspiration for Buddhist Studies in Santiniketan and my personal guide since many decades, exposes the Sahajasiddhi of Dombi Heruka on the basis of textual traces.

A young and meritorious scholar, Geshe Dangsong Namgyal, Norbutse Monastery, Kathmandu, introduces the history of Bon Tantra in Tibetan Language. This is a special a tribute to the promotion of the Tibetan Language and Culture.[14]

Charles Willemen voices his insights into the Abhiṣeka system on the basis of his extensive research on the Chinese translations of the Hevajra Tantra, while David Templeman, the expert on medieval Buddhist history, interprets Tāranātha and his works from a new point of view.

Shedup Tenzin, a treasure and support of our faculty, introduces skillfully the view of the Sakya tradition of 'Path and Fruit' in regard to Tantra practice.

Andrey Terentyev is the guide to a secret valley, hidden in Buryatia, where the sacred landscape is identified as the Mandala of Cakrasamvara.

The late Dzongsar Ngari Thingo Rinpoche & Susanne von der Heide present a stunning documentation of Wall Paintings of Meditative Deities from the Mahāyoga Tantra in an Ancient Cave temple of Upper Mustang.

As for my contributions, the paper presented at the conference 'Hermeneutics of Mandala Art' recessed to the Art Session. The exposition on 'Simhamukha: The Lion-faced Durgā of the Tibetan Tantrik Pantheon' is to be seen in context of my book review of David Seyfort Ruegg: The Symbiosis of Buddhism with Brahmanism in South Asia and of Buddhism with 'Local Cults' in Tibet and the Himalayan region. And 'The Alchemy of Vision in Tibetan Tantrik Practice' was a paper presented at a National Conference at the University of Bodhgaya (2007), never published.

Usually publications of any sort end with acknowledgments and listing names. Some names of persons and institutions have been mentioned above. I could add endlessly.

However, the Indian Council of Cultural Research, the Indian Council of Historical Research, the University Grants Commission, The Asiatic Society of Kolkata, Visva-Bharati, all contributors,

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14. The Department of Indo-Tibetan Studies at Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan, is bi-lingual (English and/ or Tibetan). This is the only academic institution in India, which accepts PH.D. Thesis written in Tibetan.

Charles Willemen for the editorial board, the publisher Praveen Mittal, Buddhist World Press Delhi, etc. have made the Symposium and this publication possible.

Special thanks are offered to Prof. Rajat Kanta Ray, Vice Chancellor of Visva-Bharati (2006-2011) for his enlightened vision and activities in the service of Gurudev Rabindranth Tagore's Santiniketan.

May this contribution be of good use for those who want to understand and realize ultimate reality.

All mistakes as an editor are mine. All credit goes to the limitless sky and ocean.

SARVA MANGALAM

GEZA BETHLENFALVY

Beginning of Tantrik Studies: The Works of Csoma de Kőrős

Athough Buddhism spread quite fast and widely troughout Asian countries, in Europe it became known very slowly and late. First the legend of Barlaam and Josafat, originating from the life-story of Budhha arrived around the 11th century from Iran in a Christianized form, then Marco Polo reported about some Buddhists whom he met in the Chinese court of Khubilai, then the Jesuit and Capuchin priests, and the geographical discoverers wrote reports about their impressions.

Scholarly discussions started only around the turn of the 18th -19th centuries, and original texts were translated first in the 30ies of the 19th century. Among the early scholars dealing with original texts was Alexander Csoma de Kőrős, who translated important passages from Tibetan, mostly originating from Sanskrit, like e.g. 'The Twelve Deeds of the Buddha', and gave a detailed description of the holy scriptures of Buddhism. At the same time George Turnour translated from Pali language a work of historical legends, which was printed in 1837.[1]

At this time the question aroused: which Buddhism, which texts are more ancient, which was the language in which Buddha spoke? The question was discussed among others by G. Turnour and Brian H. Hodgson, who stressed the antiquity of the Sanskrit tradition.[2]

This problem remained a topic of several sudies and books till the present day, especially concerning the age of certain documents of the different Buddhistic traditions. But it was established quite early, that the Pāli texts, probably based on a Magadhi dialect, which the Buddha might have used, - that is Theravada Buddhism - is the more ancient one, and the Sanskrit, Mahāyāna texts have been probably written later. Csoma remarks in a letter to James Prinsep: 'Sutras in general – i.e. all the works in the Kahgyur except the 21 volumes of the Sher-chhin and the 22 volumes of the Rgyud class, - ... were first written in the Sindhu language and the Sher-chhin and Rgyud in the Sanskrit. It is probable that in the seventh century and afterwards the ancient Buddhistic religion was remodelled and generally written in Sanskrit'.

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1. The Mahawanso, in Roman characters, with the translation subjoined, and an Introductory Essay on Pali Buddhistical Literature, vol. I, containing the first 38 chapters, Colombo, 1837

2. c.f. B. H. Hodgson: „Note on the primary language of the Buddhist writings", *JASB* VI. 1837, pp. 682-689

This letter of Csoma is quoted by Hodgson in his very important and in many respects pioneering papers 'Essays on the Language, Literature and Religion of Nepal and Tibet'.[3]

Consequently in European research the interest turned towards the Pāli literature and the Pāli Canon. In one of the most well-known books on Indian Buddhist literature, in 'A History of Indian Literature, Buddhist Literature and Jaina Literature' by Maurice Winternitz[4] the Pāli texts are described in 216 pages, Sanskrit Language Buddhist literature in 145 pages, and the Tantra type of literature in 25 pages. The same approach can be noted - in general - in the European research on Buddhism. The publication of Sanskrit texts gained momentum after the middle of the 19th century, the Mahāyāna also started to interest scholars. Catalogues of various collections of Sanskrit manuscripts were compiled. We may mention some important publications, among them the 'Sanskrit Buddhist Literature of Nepal' by Rajendralal Mitra (Calcutta 1882) or C. Bendall's 'Catalogue of Buddhist Sanskrit Manuscripts in Cambridge' (Cambridge 1883), and Haraprasada Shastri's 'A Descriptive Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Government Collection under the care of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, I. Buddhist Manuscripts', Calcutta 1917.

Through the availability of Sanskrit texts and their translations the understanding of the various aspects of Mahāyāna Buddhism spread in the scholarly world, several papers and books were published about its literature, philosophy and cult.

But the study of Tantrik literature and cult started even later, and some representative personalities of the Bengal Renaissance thought that it was a medieval corruption of the religion of the Vedas, an obstacle to India's spiritual rebirth. The British observers also considered it as superstitious and barbaric, and as a natural enemy of morality and civilization in general, to the British way of life in particular.

Let us have a look at only one single scripture, but written by an important expert, the already mentioned Rajendralal Mitra. We present three excerpts from the pages 261-264 of his 'Sanskrit Buddhist Literature of Nepal', published by the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1882, where he writes about the Sanskrit manuscript entitled Tathīgata-guhyaka alias Guhya-samagha (probably meaning Guhyasamāja):

> 'As a Tantric composition of the esoteric kind, it has all the characteristics of the worst specimens of śakta works of that type. The professed object in either case, is devotion of the highest kind – absolute and unconditional – at the sacrifice of all wordly attachments, wishes and aspirations; but in working it out theories are indulged in and practices

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3. First published in 1874, reprinted in Bibliotheca Himalayica, Series II, volume 7, New Delhi, 1972:125
4. original publication in German, 1922, English translation published in Delhi 1983

enjoined which are at once the most revolting and horrible that human depravity could think of, and compared to which the worst specimens of Holiwell Street literature of the last century would appear absolutely poor. The shroud of mystery alone serves to prevent their true characters being seen, but divested of it works of the description would deserve to be burnt by the common hangman. Looking at them philosophycally the great wonder is that even a system of religion so pure and so lofty in its aspirations as Buddhism could be made to ally itself with such pestilent dogmas and practices.'...

'The fifteenth section is particularly disgusting in its details as it describes the adoration of Buddha through damsels of twelve years of age, daughters of Chandalas, dancing women, and other low castes and by observances of rituals of the most revolting kind. Daily intercourse with daughters of the chandala caste in out of the way places is deemed an essential of the highest importance, and particular stress is laid on their personal charms. A variety of mantras are given for the purpose of these adorations and also incantations and charms for curing diseases, for causing hallucination or death, for aquiring superhuman powers and for other purposes.'...

'All the ritualistic forms of dhyána, dháraná, mudrá, nyása, sádhana, etc. of reflection, meditation, gesticulation, regulation of breath, and other manifestation of mummery which characterize the Tantric cult of the Hindus are all faithfully reproduced, and interspersed with hymns, prayers, hallelujahs, etc. Some of these are in themselves of perfectly unexceptionable character. Others, absurd, unmeaning, or stupid as they are, are not in themselves such as to be particularly objectionable. But they are sometimes disfigured by injunctions which are highly repulsive. Not satisfied with the orders given in the last chapters to make offerings of excrementitious matter on the homa fire, the author goes to the length of recommending such substance as human food, denouncing all repugnance to such articles as sinful, and enjoining that no food or drink should be taken by a worshipper which has not been mixed with ordure, or urine, or flash-meat of some kind. Such injunctions would, doubtless, be best treated as the ravings of madmen.'

Thus, the serious study of Tantra started much later, although the Tantrik tradition existed alive in various parts of India, including Bengal.

A resurrection of the Tantrik cult in the beginning of the 20th century can be located in Bengal, where Sir John Woodroffe, a High Court judge, rediscovered and popularised what is Tantra on a world-wide scale. Using the pseudonym Arthur Avalon he published several books on Tantra from 1913 onwards. How far goes the reality of these writings remains a question for serious research, what one can see is that he used informations of Bengali friends who were really knowledgeable, but without a scholarly critical approach, so e.g. one of his

most popular works, the Mahānirvāṇa Tantra was probably a compilation prepared on the order of modern Bengal institutions of the late 19th century. About this question the last study is the book of Kathleen Taylor, published in 2001: 'Sir John Woodroffe, Tantra and Bengal — An Indian Soul in a European Body?[5]

In her book Kathleen Taylor writes: 'one time the Mahānirvāṇa Tantra had some popularity in Bengal. It was printed and published under the editorship of Pandit Ananda-candra Vedanta-vagisha and issued from the Adi-Brahmo-Samaj Press. Raja Ram Mohan Roy himself was a follower of the Tantras, married after the Shaiva form and used to practice the Tantrik worship. His spiritual preceptor Svami Hariharananda, was well known to be a saint who had attained to perfection (Siddha-purusa). He endeavored to establish the Mahānirvāṇa Tantra as the Scripture of the Brahmo-Samaj. The formula and the forms of the Brahmo Church are borrowed from the initiation in Brahman worship (Brahma-diksha) in this Tantra. The later Brahmos somewhat losing their selves in their spirit of imitation of Christian rituals were led to abandon the path shown to them by Raja Ram Mohan; but yet even now many among them recite the Hymn to the Brahman which occurs in the Mahānirvāṇa Tantra.'

A serious, text-based research on Tantra started after the arrival of H.H. the Dalai Lama in India in 1959, when many Lamas and experts of Tantrik cults came with him, and Western scholars could consult them, work with them in India, England, France, USA, Italy, etc. The newly established monasteries around the world could accommodate interested foreigners, who could get initiations in the secret teachings, too. Thousands could listen and participate in the Kālacakra rituals led by His Holiness, the Dalai Lama himself. As a result today we have many excellent books on Tantra, but also a lot of popular writings full of misunderstandings, misinterpretations. Sex has become a publicity matter, and Tantra is used also in the wrongest way.

But let us come to the main question of our paper: how did Alexander Csoma de Kőrős understand Tantra, and how he conveyed his knowledge? The main point is of course his Kanjur catalogue.[6] How does he write about the 22 volumes of the *rGyud* / Tantra section?

He gives the titles both in Sanskrit and in Tibetan and goes according to the original numbering marked by the letters of the Tibetan alphabet.

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5. Curzon Press, Richmond, Surrey, 2001
6. The last almost complete reprint of the writings of Csoma de Kőrős was published in 1984 in Budapest, 'Collected Works of Alexander Csoma de Kőrős' edited by J. Terjék, Volumes I-IV. The volume entitled 'Tibetan Studies' is a reprint of the articles contributed to the Journal af the Asiatic Society of Bengal and Asiatic Researches. The 'Analysis of the Dulva'was first published in 1836, the 'Analysis of the Sher-chin-p'hal-ch'hen-dkon-seéks-do-dé-nyáng-dás and Gyut, being the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th divisions of the Tibetan Work, entitled the Kah-Gyur' was published in 1839, and the 'Abstract of the Contents of the Bstan-Hgyur'also in 1839.

The basic ideas of the Tantrik literature in the Kanjur are summarised by Csoma in the following way: 'These volumes, in general, contain mystical theology. There are descriptions of several gods and goddesses. Instructions for preparing the mandalas, or circles, for the reception of those divinities. Offerings or sacrifices presented to them for obtaining their favour. Prayers, hymns, charms, &c. &c. addressed to them. There are also some works on astronomy, astrolology, chronology, medicine and natural philosophy.'

Easiest point is to compare the description of the Guhyasamāja Tantra, about which we already have seen an earlier presentation. In the 5th volume of the Kanjur it is the second scripture, pages 368-369 in the mentioned 'Tibetan Studies'. Csoma writes: 'Shri guhya samaja, Tib. *Dpal-gsang-va-hdus-pa.* ... A collection of holy mysteries. The salutation both here and in the preceding work is addressed to Vajra Satwa (the supreme intelligence). Bhagaván, the Vajra Satwa, on the request of five Tathágatas (the five Dhyáni Buddhas) explains the idea of the Supreme being. There are several discussions on the soul and the Supreme spirit by Vajra, by the before mentioned five Tathágatas, and by Maitreya. This and the preceeding work are well worthy of being read and studied, as they will give an idea of what the ancients thought of the human soul and of God.'

The earlier scripture which is recommended by Csoma is described by him: 'Shri chan'da mahá ro'sha'na, Tib. *dpal-gtum-po-khro-vo-ch'hen-po*. 'The great fierce and wrathful one,' – name of a divinity (styled Dévasura)... The subject is mystical theology. The speakers are Bhagaván (Vajra Satwa) and Bhagaváti (Prajnápáramitá). It is in the form of a dialogue, like that between Shiva and Durgá, on Tantrika subjects. Bhagaván instructs Bhagaváti how to prepare the mandala for the puja of Shri Chan'da mahá ros'han'a, and how to perform the rites and ceremonies. The heareres are Vajra Yogis and Vajra Yoginís. Bhagaváti asks also who are they to whom this tantra may be communicated? There are told several modes of empowering a disciple by his spiritual teacher (or the initiation into the holy mysteries of the religion) – admonitions not to violate his vow or promise. On leaf 37-39, there is an explication of the several emblems used in the mandala. Besides several other miscellaneous subjects, there are many discussions on the nature of the human body and the soul, as also on that of the Supreme being. (This is an excellent tantra, and in a good and easy translation.)'.

From these representations one can see that Csoma completely understood the functions of the text, knows what a mandala is, how to use it for the visualisation of the divinities, understands the role of rituals, knows what is vajra, a yogi and a yoginī, what is the role of a spiritual teacher, the initiation, has an idea about the Tantrik understanding of human soul and God, the Supreme being, the Supreme spirit.

Alexander Csoma de Kőrős was specially interested in the Kālacakra Tantra, he wrote a separate article about it (pp. 21-23 in'Tibetan Studies' (first published in1833). He also gives a short description of this Tantra in the Kanjur catalogue: In the first *(Ka)*, volume, under

Number 3 we find the 'Paramádi-Buddha uddhrita shri kála chakra (nama Tantra Rájá), Tib. *Mch'chog-gi-dang-pohi-sangs-rgyas-las-byung-va-rgyud-kyi-rgyal-po-dpal-dus-kyi-hkhor-lo*. A principal tantra, styled the venerable Kála-chakra, issued from the supreme or first Buddha. This is the first original work of a Tantrika sytstem that originated in the north, in the fabulous Shambhala. It was introduced into India in the tenth century, by Cilupa, and into Tibet in the eleventh. There are in this work some calculations of certain epochs, and mention is made of Makha, and some predictions representing the rise, progress, and decline of the Mahomedan religion. This also was delivered by Sha'kya at the request of Da-bzang, a king of Shambhala. The subject, in general, of this voume, is cosmography, astronomy, chronology, and the description of some gods.'

In the article on the Kālacakra Tantra published in JASB II., 1833, two points are stressed: first is the idea of the 'chief first Buddha, (Ādi-Buddha), a kind of Christian One-god, Single-God, for which idea Csoma probably associates the thought of being the same as the 'Samanian' idea coming from Transoxania. He also mentions that in the Tanjur there are fifty-two tracts or treatises on the Kālacakra translated from Sanskrit, but he reports about many other volumes written by Tibetan authors on the same subject, and mentions some printed Tibetan volumes preserved in the library of the Asiatic Society. – The other important matter, which Csoma mentions is that besides mystical theology and philosophy there are several works on astronomy and astrology, which interested him especially, as he did a lot of work on the Tibetan modes of reckoning time (included in his Grammar, pp.147-154) and a very interesting and important Chronological Table (also in the Grammar, pp.181-198)[7], which is the first scholarly account of the History of Buddhism and Tibet.

We may note, that on the page 193 he again mentions the Scythian nation ('or of the Sacae of the ancients') – referring to the oral tradition, according to which the Sekler tribe of Hungarians, to which Csoma belonged, originates from the Skythian nation of Central Asia, and considers the question, whether the Shakya clan of the Buddha and the 'Hungarian' Skythians, may be related.

As a last point let us open the fiftieth Section of the Mahāvyutpatti,[8] and see the pages 59-64 in wich 122 names in Sanskrit, Tibetan and English are enumerated, 'phrases originating in the Mystical Doctrine', that is 'Tantric Terminology'. It is worth to run trough the basic words included in this section, and used in the Tantrik texts and religion. The basic expressions: tantra, mantra, dharani, mandala, vidya, kalpa, japa, homa, havana, abhisheka, abhishikta, siddhi,

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7. 'A Grammar of the Tibetan Language in English' originally published in Calcutta in 1834, a separate volume in the Collected Works of Alexander Csoma de Kőrös, printed in 1984
8. Sanskrit-Tibetan-English Vocabulary, being an edition and translation of the Mahvyutpatti, first published by the Asiatic Society of Bengal, in three parts, in the years 1910, 1916, 1944, and reprinted in Budapest in 1984 in the Collected Works of Alexander Csoma de Kőrös

sadhaka – are followed by the names of gods and goddesses, - and a special group enumerates the various mudrās. In the end the terminology of Tantrik rituals, sacrifices is given.

We may conclude, that the various works of Csoma de Körös show, that during the eight years spent in the Himalayan Gompas besides studying the various Tantrik texts he probably has seen the working of the Tantrik cult as well, and understood it in a way, few foreign or Indian scholars did in the following half century, more exactly until 1959. One can of course find terminologies, which are understood nowadays in a different way (cf. Ādibuddha) but as a pioneer we have to acknowledge his efforts and results properly.

PREM SARAN

Tantra as Persistent Counter-Culture: An Indic Play Ethic and its Global Outreach

INTRODUCTION

A yoni-pīṭha is the main icon at the famous Kāmākhyā temple in Guwahati, which is the most important Devī shrine for Hindu worshippers in South Asia. It epitomizes certain liberal cultural values of the Indic civilization, as prevalent especially in the Assam-Bengal region of India and in some contiguous parts of South Asia.

Accordingly, given the persistence of Hindu and Buddhist Tantra in South Asia over fifteen centuries, and also given the continuous mutual borrowing between Hinduism and Buddhism, I shall extrapolate diachronically in this paper from my Tantra field research in the Kathmandu Valley[1] to a general axiology of Indic culture as a whole. For, in Nepal particularly, this continuous transmission and mutual borrowing of Hindu-and Buddhist Tantrik themes may well be characterized as Hindu-cum-Buddhist, with some of my Newar Buddhist informants speaking rather positively of the Hindu Mother Goddess Kāmākhyā and her putative son Minanāth, one of the most famous of the Tantrik Mahāsiddhas in the shared Nāth–Śaivite/Buddhist-Tantrik and related traditions that first came into vogue in medieval South Asia[2].

Further, I propose to juxtapose my anthropological fieldwork among Hindu and Buddhist Tantriks in the Nepal Valley with my self-reflexive experience of the culture of Assam, where I have been living for over 30 years now as a civil servant and as the husband of an Assamese woman, and where I was also initiated into the Tantrik cult at the Kāmākhyā Temple in 1981. I shall thereby holographically construct my axiology of Indic culture, by foregrounding the potent presence of the Tantrik worldview as a 'permanent counter-culture' within Indic culture, as Jeffrey Kripal[3] so felicitously put it.

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1. Saran 2008
2. White 1996
3. Foreword, Saran 2008

THREE CORE TANTRIK THEMES

No visitor to the three main towns of the Kathmandu Valley-namely, Kathmandu, Bhaktapur and Patan - can fail to notice the ubiquitous depictions, in metal sculpture and cloth painting, of Tantrik deities in sexual union. These are of course traditional icons, but they are now vastly expanded in number and visibility, the more profitably to titillate the large number of Western tourists who visit the fabled vale every year.

Enculturated as they are into the comparative blandness of their own Judaeo-Christian traditions, these antipodally novel artisanal creations strike the fancy of the European and American visitors. Needless to add, this helps to open their purse strings too, which are already temporarily loosened by their tourist's affluence, engendered as that is by the skewed exchange rates obtained between the Western and South Asian currencies.

International cash flows apart, however, what is more salient for my own purposes here is the sexual union that these icons focus on. Of course this erotic conjunction of the male and female principles is meant to represent complex and subtle philosophical and mystical ideas, which are of hoary vintage in the South Asian culture area, as well as wider afield in the various parts of East and Southeast Asia to which they were exported[4]. It is also used, however, as a model for self-divinization and other systematic ritualized action by Tantrik practitioners, whether this is in the realm of yogic visualization or of actual physical union.

These iconographic specimens thus neatly encapsulate my three core Tantrik/Indic themes. These are, respectively, holonic-individuality, hedonism (and the related cultural syndrome of līla), and gender-mutuality. As regards the first, the above deities provide templates for the experiential construction of a divinized self-image, based on a mystically-generated sense of personhood. As for the second, the overt ecstatic parameters of these conjoined images are very obvious; and Tantrik sādhana strives to parlay such ecstasy into the realm of enstasy, which is Mircea Eliade's[5] term for the experience of yogic (i.e. mystical) union.

Related also to the second theme is the ludic aspect of these icons, based ethno-culturally on the traditional Indic cosmogony that views the cosmos as being continuously generated by the erotic play of the divine. Finally, the icons concerned make visually evident the third theme of gender-complementarity or – mutuality, which is based on the pervasively fundamental and pan-Indic ideology of Samkhya.

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4. Asma 2006:59ff
5. At the same time, however, I do not exclude the South Asian versions of Christianity and Islam from the scope of the term "Indic". For these have partaken, over many centuries, of a fertile symbiosis with the above religions of indigenous province. Also, they are therefore quite distinct from their European-cum-North American and Arab forms, respectively.

In what follows, I shall expatiate on these three Tantrik themes as being inherent leitmotifs of Indic culture. Further, I shall also use my discussion of these themes as a tactical *point d'appui*, to mount an anthropological critique of 'Westernity', which is my own academically (if pejoratively) gauche synonym for modernity. Again, for the last-mentioned purpose of cross-cultural comparison, I shall utilize the ample scholarly material on the neo-Tantrik movement of Rajneeshism that has made such a splash in the West. And for interpreting that material, I shall make use too of my own lived experience of Western civilization as an ethno-cultural system. That anthropological experience was aggregated through the participating observation involved in my five-year academic sojourn in the U.S.A., over the decade between 1985 and 1995.

INDIC CULTURAL BACKGROUND

Before broaching my discussion proper, it will be useful to outline the general Indic background of my study. And in that context, it will also be necessary to define my key terminological distinctions, and thus my philosophical axioms.

First the term 'Indic': by this, I refer to the indigenous civilizational bases of South Asian cultures. Thus, insofar as mine is an essay in religious anthropology, the term indicates the native religions of South Asia, such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism. Further, given the intimate historical and cultural links between Nepal and India, especially Eastern and North Eastern India, it can be safely assumed that the conclusions of my research do very much apply in the larger, pan-South Asian context. Moreover, given the holistic and holographic nature of culture, it is also obvious that my three core Tantrik themes are intrinsic, if muted and counter-cultural, aspects of the Indic civilization as a whole.[6]

Within Hinduism and Buddhism - and also in Jainism - there is little doubt that Tantra (which I define lower down) has been extant as a powerful current of ideology and praxis, from the very early centuries of our era. This stream has strong links with Śaivism, as also Vaiśnavism, and is additionally almost synonymous with Śaktism. Although Buddhist goddesses are usually termed prajňā, and are quiescent like puruṣa - the Hindu male-principle of gnosis - they may still be treated as functionally equivalent to the Hindu ones. And, interestingly, many Buddhist Newars in the Kathmandu Valley do routinely refer to their female deities as 'Śaktis', as in Hindu Tantra.

As a result, on the one hand, Tantra has exhibited a phenomenal degree of *persistence* in South Asia. This is quite evident from the cases of well-known neo-Tantriks of contemporary

6. Bolle 1962, 1965

times, like Aurobindo[7]and the more recent Rajneesh. And, on the other, it has flourished in precisely those parts of the Indic culture-area, which are noted for their matrifocal and gynocentric traditions.

These are Nepal, and - in modern India - Assam, West Bengal, Sikkim, Orissa, Kerala, and so on. Moreover, these geographically frontier regions, and especially Assam and Nepal, have fortuitously been spared the more intense and pernicious effects of the 'triple puritanism' that 'mainland' South Asia had historically been subject to. These are Brahminism, Islam and Christianity, all of which had mitigated their thrust by the time they reached the more 'liminal' areas of the subcontinent, as I briefly explicate below.

Secondly, by the term 'Brahminism', I mean the ascetical trends in the Indic civilization, as propagated mainly by the Brahmin priestly groups among the Hindus; it is such attitudes that (for instance) underlie the pan-Indic male anxiety-syndrome regarding the loss of semen. This is a magical fear, and such loss is believed to be inimical to one's successful achievement of the salient religious goals, especially yoga or 'mystical union'. Honorable exceptions here are the Tantrik Brahmins, especially the 'left-handed ones, say of Assam and Bengal; and examples are my own guru and parama-guru (i.e., guru's guru).

Thirdly, we come to the term 'mystic', by which I refer to the cross-culturally documented and not uncommon experience of union with the ground of being, whether that ground is defined theistically or otherwise. The quest for mystical union (i.e. yoga) has been a longstanding preoccupation in the Indic civilization, which is why the yogi and his ilk have been a perennial and charismatic cynosure of the South Asian culture-area.

Finally, the term 'Tantra': I refer by this to the centuries-old cultic activities of erotic mysticism that have had a truly pan-Indic spread, but have been concentrated in the gynocentric regions indicated above. Tantra is also therefore very much a yogic parampara and sādhana, since the ultimate aim is the traditional Indic one of samādhi or nirvāṇa, that is to say the mystical experience.

Tantriks use the traditional yogic techniques – such as prāṇayama, nyāsa, mantra, and Kuṇḍalinī- or lāya-yoga – but they do so in conjunction with ritualized sexual union. This latter may be actually performed, or only in visualization. The former is called vāmācāra, and the latter dakśinacāra.

These two modes of Tantra, that is the so-called 'left'-and 'right-handed' practices, respectively, are essentially quite similar insofar as their respective success in triggering the apical state of mystical consummation itself is concerned. The latter is and inner', experiential state

7. Saran 2008

of intuitive knowledge, i.e. jňāna, which can be accessed by both kinds of praxis, as by any other kind of sādhana.

Again, as far as the left-handed praxis is concerned, male Buddhist Tantriks usually retain their seed, whereas Hindus usually treat it as an oblation into the sacrificial fire of the yoni. Here too, the climactic divergence is most probably of very little significance; as regards the attainment of the *unio mystica* itself is concerned.

What is salient, however, regarding Tantrik praxis as a whole, is the intensification – for instance by prolongation – of sensual pleasure. For the Tantrik sādhaka, and sādhika, seek thereby to leapfrog existentially into the state of mystical union. And that consummatory experience is described canonically in the Indic scriptures - as in the Hindu Taittiriya Upaniṣad'- as a state of ineffable joy, or ānanda, which is the *raison d'etre* of the entire Tantrik sādhana.

Having thus clarified my key terms, I can turn now to the cultural setting proper, of my study of the South Asian Tantrik traditions. As already stated, my fieldwork was conducted among the denizens of the Kathmandu Valley. The religious worldview here is very strongly matrifocal and gynocentric, like that of the matrilineal Nayars of Kerala to which group I myself belong; and of the Indo-Mongoloids of Eastern and Northeastern India - namely Oriyas, Bengalis, Assamese, Sikkimese, etc.

Like the other Indo-Mongoloids, the contributions of the Nepalese to the Indic civilization have been quite distinctive and rich, as for instance in the religio-philosophical realm. Not the least of these are the Tantrik traditions, both Hindu and Buddhist, which are still so deep-rooted and persistent in the Kathmandu or Nepal Valley.

It is also pertinent to add at this point that, due to the tragic contemporary diaspora of the Tibetans, the historical connections of the Valley with the Tibetan civilization have now been reinforced by thousands of Tibetan refugees. Many of them are highly learned monks, whose Indo-Tibetan Buddhism is practically synonymous with Vajrayāna or Tantrik Buddhism. Further, some of my informants, both Hindu and Buddhist, were longstanding disciples of such lamas.

At any rate, like the Assamese and other Indo-Mongoloids, the Nepalese too are notable for the *joie de vivre* that characterizes their lifestyles. In this regard, they are quite distinct from the peoples of most other parts of South Asia, whose existential attitudes are rather ascetical and puritanical. This is probably because they, like the Assamese, were historically spared the impact of what I have called the 'triple puritanism' that much of the rest of the subcontinent was the cultural victim of.

The first strand in this triple, ascetical complex is the Brahmanical ideology that the Indo-Aryan speakers imported into South Asia via the northwest, though it became increasingly

mitigated by the indigenous matrifocal cultural elements, as the former penetrated gradually into eastern and southern India. The second is the puritanism of the Islamic *ulema*, which again got diluted as it spread eastwards, especially since Nepal, as also Indo-Muslim rulers, never subjugated Assam and Northeastern India, politically. And the third and final type of puritanism is the guilt-imbued Judaeo-Christian one, injected by the British colonizers; here again, it may be noted that Nepal was never conquered by the Western imperialists, and Assam too came under the Anglo-Saxon yoke quite late.

Having thus escaped the worst effects of the above 'triple puritanism', societies like the Nepalese have been able to preserve, in their more traditional forms, the three core Indic themes that were the subject of my field research. Hence my data were culled from the life histories of practicing Tantriks that I collected in the Kathmandu Valley, most of them being priests and/or scholars.

INDIC CIVILIZATION AND WESTERNITY

I now synoptically present my conclusions regarding my three core Indic themes, which I also contrast with the corresponding cultural attitudes of modernity / Westernity, which latter I do by adducing data from the Rajneesh movement.

1. *'Holonic/ Mandalic' Individuality:* The modal individuality of the traditional non-Western person is quite different form that of the Westerner. It is 'cosmomorphic', as the anthropologist Malcolm Crick puts it, by which he means that it is not constituted by a radical separation between the individual and the rest of the cosmos.

Naturally, the more ethnocentric Westerner, even if he or she happens to be an anthropologist, would have it that his or her cultural brand of individuality or personhood is peculiarly conducive to personal autonomy. This has, however, been confuted by the work of sociologists like David Riesman, and anthropologists like Melford Spiro.

And my own data lend substance to Crick's view: Indic personhood is indeed quite 'porous', as I term it. And it is this very 'porosity' that enables the cultural propensity of the South Asian for the experience of the *unio mystica*. As a result, it is the yogi (i.e. mystic) who is still a major culture-hero in the South Asian subcontinent, as witness the many 'swamis' who claim the limelight.

This kind of individuality may therefore be aptly termed 'mandalic' seeing that mandalas (i.e. meditation-diagrams) are a salient component of traditional yogic praxis. Or, to put it more descriptively, it may be termed 'holonic'. This is my neologism based on Arthur Koestler's concept of the 'holon', which refers to a whole that is in turn a part of other wholes. For Koestler argues that everything in nature behaves like a holon.

Thus, Indic 'holonic' individuality is antipodally different from the atomistic individuality that is modal to the Western civilization. Further, this Indic individuality, as consummated in the self-image of the mystic, bestows a very high degree of personal autonomy, since the experience of mystical union confers what the anthropologist Agehananda Bharati has called an 'irreversible poise'.

Finally, the existential attraction of the Indic mode of individuality for the Western person is indicated by the vogue of Rajneeshism in Euro-America. Many of these Western votaries of the movement were not only people with post-graduate degrees and highly successful careers, but quite a few had also been votaries of the Human Potential Movement in the West, some being in fact its leaders. In other words, in line with Maslow's hierarchy of needs, these Western Rajneeshites seemed to seek the 'transcendental' or extra-personal, namely the apical values implicated in the Indic brand of yogic/ 'cosmomorphic' individuality, such as the existential poise and autonomy that it vouchsafes.

2. *Hedonistic Well-being, with an In-built Golden Mean:* As already indicated above, Tantra is also a yogic sādhana. The only difference is that this brand of yoga involves the use of sensual/hedonistic techniques. Thus, the goal of the Tantrik too is the traditional one of mystical union, which moreover, when actually achieved and experienced, is much more blissful than even the joy of sexual union, as the canonical Taittiriya Upaniṣad explicitly states.

As a result, when Tantrik sādhana is successfully consummated in the mystical experience, it tends to put an end to the common human obsession with sex that seems to be especially pronounced among modern people. This would seem to be evident also from the paradoxical popularity of the Indian 'sex guru'Rajneesh among Westerners, belonging as he did to an apparently less 'forward' culture like the Indic.

The apparent irony here is easily resolved when we reflect that Western attitudes to human sexuality are permeated by the Judaeo-Christian ideology, which inculcates a high degree of guilt vis-à-vis sensual pleasure. As the anthropologist Allan Coult characterized this mentality, 'You must feel bad in order to feel good'! It is therefore no wonder that Rajneesh's explicitly guiltless, neo-Tantrik, teachings were so attractive to people in the supposedly sexually liberated West.

Further, the Tantrik ideology is also intimately connected with the Indic cosmogony, which views the universe as the steady-state emanation of the divine līla (i.e. sexual sport) of Śiva and Parvati. This is a far cry from the linear and grimly purposive teleology of the Western civilization, of which the joyless Protestant work-ethic is such a characteristic product.

And Rajneesh too, as a neo-Tantrik guru, sought to inculcate in his Western acolytes this ludic worldview of līla, imbued as it existentially is with a spirit of spontaneity. As he said,

'Tantra is a playfulness. It is sincere, but not serious.' And again, 'The whole of existence is celebrating ... Everywhere there is fun, there is joy and delight'.

3. *Indic Gender-mutuality:* Many contemporary Western feminist scholars of South Asia, like Miranda Shaw and Rita Gross, have commented in highly positive terms on the gender attitudes displayed in Tantrism. They see these Indic attitudes, based as they are on the traditional religious philosophy of Samkhya, as expressing an equitable ideology of 'gender-mutuality'or — 'complementarity'.

This is amply evident too from the ubiquitous, pan-Indic iconographic worship of Śiva in the form of the linga, since that icon is always embedded in the yoni-pīṭha. That is to say, Śiva is always worshipped in conjunction with his consort Śakti. And the most graphic indication of this male-female conjunction is indeed another, androgynous form of Śiva. This is the deity called Ardhanariśvara that is 'the god who is half-female', who is iconographically represented with one half of her/his/its body male, and the other female.

That this cultural syndrome is no mere ideological smokescreen, camouflaging actual Indic gender values on the ground, is also indicated by the crossculturally salient fact that a majority of the Western followers of the neo-Tantrik Rajneesh were women. And even more significantly, most of the leaders of his movement were women, who were termed 'supermoms'. This kind of leadership role-playing by women in large group situations is still quite novel by Western standards *even* today, though it is almost *passé* in supposedly backward South Asia, where many of the top leaders in the political systems of these countries have been and are women! And of course, in traditional South Asian Tantrik praxis, women too have been influential gurus.

And that brings us to my concluding arguments about the persistent counter-cultural axiology of Tantra as constituting an Indic play ethic with global outreach.

TANTRA AS PERSISTENT COUNTER-CULTURE AND INDIC PLAY ETHIC

In sum therefore, South Asian Tantra displays the remarkable cultural persistence of three core countercultural themes, which I have also shown to be antipodally distinctive vis-à-vis the corresponding ideological and civilizational mainsprings of modernity / Westernity. Also, as I have self-reflexively argued, interpreting the life-histories of my Tantrik informants in Kathmandu Valley from the standpoint of my own experience as an traditionally initiated Tantrik for about thirty years now, the quintessentially South Asian axiology of Tantra can be read as a hologram of the radical valorization of play and pleasure—both sensual and intellectual—within the Indic civilization. Again, the *leitmotif* of the Tantric axiology is nothing short of a 'ritualized erotic

aesthetics'[8] that is underpinned by the 'hedonistic-aesthetic'[9] experience of śringara-rasa. And that syndrome can in turn be reinterpreted in contemporary secular terms as a veritable play ethic.

Further, these prototypically Indic themes clearly have significant outreach — as for instance evidenced by the export in medieval times, to Tibet and Southeast Asia (in which latter region Asma[10] even expatiates on a 'Tantric Theravada'), of the Vajrayāna Buddhism that was prevalent in the Assam-Bengal area during the reign of the Pālās between the 8th and 12th centuries, as well as by its more recent serendipitous transmission to the West via the unwitting exodus of learned Tibetan lames thereto. For the contemporary vogue of the neo-Tantra of the Hindu Rajneesh and of the scholastic Buddhist Tantra of the lamas—as salient Indic inputs into Western culture — does seem to indicate the potential global outreach of Tantra as a 'permanent counter-culture'[11].

Finally, one may even speculate that this ongoing cross-cultural fertilization could help fashion a new and humanistic play ethic[13], to replace the stodgy and dysfunctional Protestant work ethic as an innovation engine for the new knowledge society worldwide. And if that is too farfetched, it could at the very least conduce to Rabindranath Tagore's dream of a sensory re-enchantment of the world.

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8. Kripal *op cit*
9. Bharati 1977
10. Asma 2006:78
11. Kane 2004

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CHANDRA N. NAIK

Philosophy and Hermeneutics of Buddhist Tantra

1. IN MEMORY OF CSOMA DE KŐRŐS

Let me pay my homage to Alexander Csoma de Kőrős declared as a Bodhisattva in Japan in 1933, who opened the Heart of the West for the teachings of the Buddha

About him Ernest Hetenyi narrated that the opening up of Tibetan studies to Western scholars was largely due to the pioneering works of Alexander Csoma de Kőrős. Starting from his native land on foot in search of the original homes of the Magyars, thought to be somewhere in Central Asia, this remarkable Hungarian eventually reached the western borderlands of Tibet and devoted the rest of his life to the study of Tibetan language and literature"[1].

2. MEANING OF TANTRA

Tantra means weaving, interwovenness of things and actions, interdependence of all that exists, continuity in interaction of cause and effect, in traditional development, which like a thread weaves its way through the fabric of history and of individual lives. It means tradition, spiritual continuity or succession. yantra, mantra and mudrā; visible, audible and touchable unite the powers of mind (citta), speech (vak) and body (kāya) in order to realize the final state of completeness and enlightenment. Principles precede literature. So Hindu Tantra connoting literature on Tantra follows Tantra principles represented by Buddhist Tantra works.

Guru Gampopa applied the word Tantra to represent a philosophy comprehensive enough to embrace the whole of knowledge, a system of meditation which will produce the power of concentrating the mind upon anything whatsoever, and an art of living which will enable one to utilize each activity of body, speech, and mind as an aid on the path of liberation[2].

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1. Internet dated 9th March 2009
2. Gampopa: The Twelve Indispensable Things, cf. Evans-Wentz, Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines, p. 79

3. PHILOSOPHY OF TANTRA

Popular Mantrayāna like Tantrayānic schools based on Mahāyāna monism interprets the essential identity of all beings with the absolute as cosmical interrelatedness. Nothing happens without some effect on everything else. Sādhakas (adepts) can unlock in themselves the door to the absolute and thus to liberation by Mantras.

Vajrayāna applies the word vajra to enlightenment (insight into emptiness or Buddha nature) and to absolute emptiness itself, which is unshakable, indivisible, impenetrable, incombustible and indestructible.

Liberation method of Vajrayāna proceeds from conviction that for each human being the world of phenomena unfolds anew and individually from the absolute as its seed *(bīja)* as he, through his ignorance, imagines two things, namely phenomenal world and deliverance, wherein reality there is only one, namely absolute. Supramundane figures of Vajrayāna are subjective apparitions of the Absolute. A Bodhisattva embodies the absolute more purely than a human teacher who is affected by samsaric incidents.

Andrea Loseries-Leick in her Tibetan Mahāyoga Tantra, an ethno-historical study of skulls, bones and relics[3], discussed Tantrik Buddhism as an esoteric system of Sādhana, promulgated by a large number of Siddhas from about 7th century onward in eastern India where Tantrik teachers gave importance to rituals (kriyā), mystical diagrams (mandalas), magical spells (mantras), vows (vratas) and austerities (niyamas) and established identity of phenomenal world (samsāra) with highest truth or absolute, a new system that fascinated the popular mind and had tremendous effect on the social and cultural life of that time.

The crown of bone (skull) is worn by a Yogi for the adoration of one's Guru and master and chosen divinity (Hevajra). Earrings are worn to indicate one's deafness to evil words spoken against one's guru and Vajradhāra. The necklace suggests the mantra intoned, the bracelets one's renunciation of harming living beings, the girdle one's service of the Mudrā (Tantrik consort). The body should always be signed with these signs of the Five Buddhas[4].

Kapālapa ('the man with the skull'), listed among the line of 84 Siddhas[5], a man of low caste in the country of Rajapuri, was initiated into the Mandala of Hevajra by Krişṇacāri after the death of his wife and five sons. He practiced accordingly the developing stage (utpannakrama

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3. Andrea Loseries-Leick: Tibetan Mahayoga Tantra. An Ethno-Historical Study of Skulls, Bones and Relics, B.R. Publishing Corporation. Delhi 2008: 20,33,158
4. Snellgrove, Dávid 1959:II, ch X:118 Robinson 1979: 222ff
5. Nagarjuna: *Uhapoha, Shantibhikshushastri*, Lucknow 1955:55

by visualizations, gradual generations of deities and production of mandalas) and perfecting stage (samopannakrama) by recitation of mantra, breath control, manipulation of energies etc. He made six sets of ornaments from the bones of his wife. The skull was the developing stage, the fact that it was empty inside showed him the perfecting stage. In nine years, he achieved total integration, and attained siddhi. He then spoke to his trainees: 'I am the Yogin of the skull. The nature of all existing things, I know to be like this skull. So I behave according to my inner power.' He became famous as Guru Kapālapa and worked for the benefit of living beings for five hundred years. Then with a circle of six hundred, he went to the realm of the dākas.

It is to say that he must have realized what Nāgārjuna expressed in the following lines: *Anirodham anutpādam anucchedam asāsvatam, anekārtham anānārtham anāgamam anirgamam, yah pratityasamutpādam prapncopasamamsīvam, esayamāsasambuddhastam vande vadatāmvaram-*[6].

4. MEDITATION

As the logic is not the proper measure of deepest experience it truly turns out to be impotent to realize the Absolute as emptiness. This is also a demarcating line between the Hindu self and Buddhist non-self as Stcherbatsky and Maurya expressed in the following sentences:

Aise tark se kyā lābh hai jo nirpeksha kā jňāna nahi karāsakta[7]. Such logic does not admit change in consciousness, as Yogācāra believed which is an unbridgeable gulf between Buddhism and Vedanta. The latter's māya is developing on Brahman, but avidya in Vijňānavada is not depending on any eternal substratum.

A text on meditation written in Sri Lanka[8]– probably about the 18th century showed how meditation at the time had degenerated into a ritual of reciting formulas, burning candles, etc. In 'Psychology of Buddhist Meditation' W. Rahula (1980:273) refers to gata-paccāgata-vatta (vow) on observance of going and returning. Accordingly the meditator took a vow never to take a step without being mindful of his kammatthāna- topic of meditation. If he walked a few steps without being mindful, then he returned to the point where he forgot his topic of meditation and walked forward again with mindfulness. It is almost as if he went back to pick up his topic of meditation dropped on the ground at that point. This is more of a ritual than a meditation.

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6. Stcherbatsky , Boudhha Nyaya, Varanasi, 1969 p. 647
7. Rhyys Davids, T.W.W. (ed.): Yogavacara's Manual. London 1896
8. D II, p. 314; MI, p. 62/Rahul p. 279

The Satipatthānasutta-sūtta[9] itself at the end without using the term bhikkhu, simply says: "Whosoever (*yo hi ko ci*) should thus cultivate (practice) these four applications of mindfulness— " One of the two fruits (phala) is to be expected of him in this very life: either perfect gnosis (anna, i.e. arahantaship) or, failing that, the state of non-returner (anāgamita, the third stage among the four supramundane attainments). The commentary (MAI, p. 269) further elaborates that this yo hi ko ci (whosoever) means any monk, nun, layman or laywoman.

Aśvaghoṣa, a contemporary of Kaniśka (78-101 A.D.) composed the Mahāyāna Shrodatapadahśāstra (Sangraha) translated into Chinese in 534 and later in 710 A.D. also gave a first introduction of Mahāyana or Śūnyavada. His Vajrasuchi (diamond needle) Vajracchedika or Vajrasuchikopaniṣada, translated by B.H. Hudson and edited later by L. Wilkinson in 1839 generalized common human nature of both high and low castes in the following stanza meaning truth, austerity, control and compassion are characteristics of a Brahman and devoid of them one is a low person as Chandal: *satyam Brahma tapo brahma cendriyanigrahah. Sarvabhute dayā brahma etad brāhmanalakshanam. Satyam nāsti tapo nāsti nāsti cendriyanigraha, sarvabhute dayānasti etaccāndala laksanam*[10].

5. PRAJŇĀ AND ŚAKTI

Bhattacharya in his 'Introduction to Buddhist Esoterism' (p. 47) said that the Buddhist Tantras in outward appearance resemble the Hindu Tantras to a marked degree but in reality there is very little similarity between them, either in subject matter or in philosophical doctrines inculcated in them, or in religious principles since the aims and objects of them are widely different from each other".

Buddhist Tantrism is not Śaktism in a creative female aspect of highest God (Śiva) or his emanations. The concept of power forms focus of interest in Hindu Tantras against the central idea of prajňā (knowledge, wisdom) in Tantrik Buddhism.

Śakti is māyā to the Buddhist. It is the very power that creates illusion, from which only prajňā can liberate us- can make us perceive those powers, which have kept us going in the rounds of life and death under their dominion and Buddhist transforms them in fire of knowledge and let them become forces of enlightenment which instead of creating further differentiation, flow in the opposite direction, towards union, towards wholeness, towards completeness.

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9. Vajrasuchi, Sloka 22-27
10. Ambedkar, B. R.: The Buddha and His Dhamma, Peoples' Education Society, Mumbai, 1957, rep. 1997, p. 350-351

The Hindu Tantra Kulacudamani asserted 'united with the śakti be full of power'. From the union of Śiva and Śakti the world is created. Buddhists do not want creation and unfoldment of the world, but coming back to the 'uncreated, unformed' state of śūnyatā from which all creation proceeds, or which is prior to and beyond all creations (if one may put the inexpressible into human language).

In Buddhist Tantrayāna the female represents the all embracing passive principle prajňā or śūnyatā and the male represents dynamic active universal means or the principle of love and compassion. If both are united, then Perfect Buddhahood is attained. Where highest love and deepest knowledge unite completeness is reestablished, and perfect enlightenment is attained. Intellect without feeling, knowledge without love, reason without compassion, female without male lead to pure negation, to rigidity, to spiritual death, to mere vacuity, while feeling without reason, love without knowledge (blind love), compassion without understanding, male without female, lead to confusion and dissolution; but where both are united, where great synthesis of heart and head, feeling and intellect, highest love and deepest knowledge, male and female principles have taken place, completeness is attained unlike in Hindu Tantra (p. 319) śakti as active principle and śiva as the passive, resting in its nature, a pure state of divine consciousness or being

Active element, upāya, and passive prajňā in Buddhism are in contrast to active śakti and passive śiva. Active knower (Buddha) becomes one with passive knowledge *(prajňā)* and result in Mahāsukha (highest indescribable happiness). Buddhas and Bodhisattvas are the embodiments of active urge, all embracing love and compassion *(upāya)* and thus are represented by the common and universal symbol of the male (sexless in spirit) in the embrace of the respective prajňā, symbolized by female deity (equally sexless in spirit), as embodiment of highest knowledge.

The concept of śakti has no place in Buddhism. Just as a Theravādin would be shocked if the term anatta were turned into atman to show that Buddhism was only a variation of Brahmanism, even so Tibetan Buddhist would be shocked if the term prajňā were rendered into śakti. One cannot arbitrarily transplant the termini of a theistic system into a non-theistic system.

6. PARADOXES

The confusion of Buddhist Tantrism with Śaktism prevented clear understanding of Vajrayāna and its symbolism, iconography as well as literature, especially that of the Siddhas who clothed the highest in the form of the lowest, the most sacred in the form of the most ordinary, the transcendent in the form of the most earthly, and deepest knowledge in the form of the most

grotesque paradoxes- a shock therapy necessary on account of over-intellectualization of religious and philosophical life of those times.

Just as Buddha rebelled against narrow dogmatism of a privileged priestly class, so did the Siddhas rebel against self-complacency of a sheltered monastic existence that had lost contact with the realities of life. Their language was as unconventional as their lives, and those who took their words literally were either misled into striving after magic powers and worldly happiness or were repelled by what appeared to them to be blasphemy as crude erotic cults of popular Tantrism. From these degenerated forms inferences about spiritual attitude of Buddhist Tantras cannot be correctly drawn.

7. HERMENEUTICS

It is a science of resolving paradoxes and intriguing esoterism to meaningful messages and practices in accordance with philosophies of all schools of Buddhist tradition, whether Sautrāntika, Vaibhāśika, Yogācāra or Mādhyamika.

One of the hermeneutical tests laid in the Vinaya of the Theravādin tradition spoke about a democratic way of settling dispute or controversy by way of jňapti, anusravana and dhārana, i.e. they held reading of the bill presented in the assembly three times and confirmed the same by acceptance of the present members by remaining in silence.

Dr. Ambedkar (1891-1956) revived Buddhism among the despised masses of the society. He drafted the constitution for India enforced since 1950, formulated on the foundation of Buddhist Vinaya, and suggested two standards (Understanding and Compassion) of determining Buddha's word. He said that the Buddha's statement ought to be rational and logical in the first place, and Buddha's word is aimed at man's welfare. So any other words and logic and philosophies not serving these two tests cannot be held as Buddha vacana, asserted Dr. Ambedkar in his last treatise[11].

There are six methodologies of hermeneutics viz., (1) Yogācāra, (2) Sākāra, (3) Nirākāra, (4) Mādhyamika, (5) Sautrāntika and (6) Prāsangika. Any interpretation must belong to, or be in conformity with one of these. They are not teaching as found in the Hindu texts.

Independent origination itself is unproduced (*anutpāda*). Dharmakāya is emptiness. Rupakāya (Sambhogakāya and Nirmāṇakāya) is independent origination. Nirmāṇakāyas are infinite emanated personalities (not incarnated) from causes and conditions due to innate capacity (Sambhogakāya) of Dharmakāya. Enlightenment means realizing all the three Kāyās.

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11. Guenther, H.V.: Yuganadha, The Tantrik View of Life, Chaukhamba Sanskrit Series, Benaras 1952: 187

rDzogs chen and Mahāmudrā are free from not only attachment or aversion but also from the choice-less state. Sakya Pandita of the Sakya lineage declared that an indifferent or choiceless state of awareness is a sure way to be reborn as an animal. The Nyingma and Kagyu schools, based in the vast lineage (vaipulya) of Asaṇga interpreted Tathāgatagarbha as being present in full form and recommended practice to gradually unveil its covering veil. The Sakyapas of the profound tradition of Nāgārjuna interpreted tathāgatagarbha only in seed (micro) form and recommended practice to develop it into its full (macro) form. In contrast Asaṇga's and Nāgārjuna's forms of Tathāgatagarbha are processes of elimination and cultivation from totality to unity and from unity to totality respectively.

The Hindu Unconditioned principle is atman, but the *rDzogs chen* transmissions of the Nyingma, Mahāmudrā of the Kagyu, *lam 'bras* of the Sakya, held this principle to be anatma, tathāgatagarbha, samantabhadra, emptiness, nisvabhavatā. Conditioning is conceptual *(kleśa)* and emotional (jňeya). Ignorance is cognitive, miscognition and more conditioning. Sugatagarbha exists epistemologically; Brahman exists ontologically (kutastha). Buddha nature, a mode of abiding, is unabidingness (asthita). Brahman is abiding (sthita).

Śūnyatā is inherent in phenomenona, while Brahman is separate entity from phenomenona. Śūnyatā is not a thing, Brahman is something. Śūnyatā is existing interdependently. Brahman exists independently. Brahman is inherent (svabhavasiddha), Śūnyatā is non-inherent (nisvabhavatā). Brahman is svalakṣaṇa siddha, Śūnyatā is lakṣaṇāta. Brahman is ultimate existence (parmārtha). Śūnyatā is unfindability of such paramārtha sattva anywhere.

The Hevajra Tantra recommended the study of Vaibhāśika, Sautrāntika, Yogācāra and Mādhyamika for initiation. Theravada, Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna held meditation progresses through śrutamayi, bhavanamayi, to cintanamayi, i.e. from wisdom gained through hearing to wisdom gained through contemplation, or to wisdom gained through meditation.

Valid lineage masters teach according to historically accepted Buddhist hermeneutics and do not give their own personal self-contradictory interpretations. Asaṇga, Vasubandhu, Nāgārjuna, Candrakīrti, Śantideva, and Atīśa believed that it is necessary to acquire correct philosophies to be able to practice Buddhist meditation properly.

According to Nathan Katz there are text-based hermeneutics and adept-based hermeneutics. Jaques Derrida, the most influential of *nouvelles critiques*, developed an understanding of languages as laden with precritical ontological commitments which lead the reader into the philosophic traps of seeking an intentionality, an author, and a systematic coherence which becloud rather than elucidate the reading of the text.

In the Laṅkāvatarasūtra Buddha says (135-136) that there are yānas only so long as the mind (citta) remains moving (pravartaḳa) in samsāra, but, when it comes to know itself, all

thought of a yāna ceases. Steinkellner discussed the Guhyasamāja's discerning of four types of meaning such as (1) the literal (aksarārtha), (2) common (samastanga), (3) hidden or pregnant (garbhi) and (4) ultimate (kolika) meaning in the texts.

Lamotte is of the view that 'the Omniscient Buddha is less a master of philosophy than a physician for universal suffering; he imparted to each the teaching that he needed'. According to Wayman 'Hermeneutics of the adept rather than the text is the basis for the entire *lam rim* genre of Tibetan literature'. To Tsong Kha Pa 'Wisdom in Tantrik Buddhism is often symbolized by the mother and method by father'.

Guenther explained 'The Dharmakāya promulgates that which is ineffable, the Sambhogakāya, the self-existing letters (*Om Mani Padme Hum)*; and the Nirmāṇakāya, the innumerable Sūtras and Tantras'. According to Tantrik exegesis a fourth Kāya Svabhavikakāya indicates ut the interpenetration of the three. Vajrayāna is understood as simply a short way of doing what takes eons according to the Paramītāyāna traditions.

Tsong Kha Pa further elucidated 'Joining method and wisdom non-dualistically is the chief meaning of method and wisdom set forth in the Mantra vehicle. Hermeneutic was rather characteristic of later Buddhism'. Current interest in hermeneutics is focused primarily on more modern theories of interpretation, a tradition beginning with the work of Friedrich Schleiermacher and continuing into the twentieth century with Bultmann, Heidegger, Gadamer, and Ricoeur. David Tracy was a leading formulator of modern hermeneutical theory.

Nettiprakarana and Petkopadesa formed the two most explicit treatises on textual interpretation for Theravada. Prajñāparamītā literature and Mādhyamika School held that one could change worldly merits into supramundane enlightenment because all things, including karma and its effect, are empty of their own being. Yogācārins follow the Sandhinirmocana, and assert the First and Second Wheels of teaching as interpretable (neyārtha) and the Third Wheel definitive (nitārtha). Svatāntrikas held the First Wheel interpretable and the Second and Third Wheels both interpretable and definitive. Prasangikas find the First and the Third Wheels interpretable and the Second Wheel definitive. Yogācarins and Svatāntrika hermeneutics held on to the authority of text for establishing the intention of Buddha in terms of his audience. Prasaṇgikas held a more universal and disinterested approach in judgments of time, place, audience, mode of expression of a text.

As Luis O. Gomez pointed out 'Buddhist tradition did not lack in hermeneutical sophistication'. In the Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra the Buddha described the Tathāgata as permanent, blissful self, very pure, and without marks, thereby converting many Thirthikas to the Dharma. But later he said that in reality there is no self, employing the principle of the Middle Path to eschew both eternalist and nihilist views. The teaching of Tathāgatagarbha is definitive because it refers in the end to Śūnyatā.

But Tsong Kha Pa asserted that 'The role of philosophy in Buddhist thought is essentially hermeneutical'. Hermeneutic has the double function of reconciling apparent contradictions between the Buddha's diverse statements while keeping alive the methodologies of interpretation by which one can extract the practical essence of each particular statement.

Not only Vajra Nāgārjuna and Vajra Candrakīrti opined that 'The Guhyasamāja tradition is deeply involved in hermeneutical strategies'. Thurman also hinted that the 'King of Tantras-Guhyasamāja is a jewel casket of all Sūtras, has its meaning sealed within by means of seven ornaments, which themselves are subdivided into twenty-eight principles. Tantrik refinement of Buddhist hermeneutics completes the tradition in such a way as to make comparison with modern disciplines of hermeneutics possible and fruitful.

In general Chinese hermeneutical structure there is a progression from naïve cataphasis (affirmation) to radical apophasis (denial) to perfected cataphasis. Tantra briefly passed through China and was established as Shingon School in Japan. Kasulis Kukai's Shingon theory 'analyses the language on three levels: cosmic, micro-cosmic and macrocosmic, the last is evaluated according to how well it leads the listener to an awareness of cosmic and microcosmic'.

Alan Sponberg enumerated and described 'three types of hermeneutics in Buddhist thought, namely (1) classifying system, (2) principles and strategies and (3) theory of understanding. Hermeneutical enterprise plays an important role in soteriology in the sense that hermeneutics, as a theory of understanding, provide a technique for divesting oneself of illusion.

Corresponding to the four alternatives of being, non-being, both, and neither, the Hinayāna Sūtras teach being, the early Mādhyamika teaches non-being, the Tathāgatagarbha teaches both, and the Lotus sūtra (perfect teaching) teaches neither. Tracy is optimistic that 'Buddhalogy can look forward to the discovery of resources that will contribute to the hermeneutical enterprise as a whole'.

The whole universe in all its dimensions is entailed in every moment of metaphysics. The Tiantai position insisted that some evil and ignorance existed even in Buddha nature after Mencius, and later discovery found that non-Confucian thinkers unanimously embraced Mencius' view of the original goodness of human nature[12].

8. PRACTICES

Buddhist Tantras cannot be fathomed theoretically, i.e., through comparisons or the study of ancient literature, but only through practical experiences or actual contact with the still existing

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12. Glasenapp, H. V.: Die Entstehung des Vajrayana, Zeitschrift der deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft, Vol. 90, 560, Leipzig 1936

Tantrik traditions and their contemplative methods, as practiced in Tibet and Mongolia, as well as in certain schools of Japan, like Shingon and Tendai.

In the degenerated form of Tantrism the female Bodhisattvas figuring in the Mandalas, like Prajňāparamītā and cundi, are sexless beings from whom, quite in accordance with ancient tradition, association of a sexual nature are strictly excluded.

Bengal, Nepal and Tibet schools emphasize polarity of male and female principles[13] as an idea of world-creating eroticism of Śaktism and represented sexless female symbols prajňā (wisdom), vidya (knowledge), or mudrā (spiritual attitude of unification, realization of Śūnyatā.

The popularity of male and female principles recognized in Vajrayāna Tantra also is raised upon a plane which is as far away from the sphere of mere sexuality as mathematical juxtaposition of positive and negative signs (+) and (-) which are valid in both realms of irrational values and rational or concrete concepts.

Male and female Buddhas and Bodhisattvas' yuganaddha (union) are indissolubly associated with highest spiritual reality in the process of enlightenment completely ignoring the realm of physical sexuality.

Figural representations of these symbols are not looked upon as portraying human beings, but as embodying experiences and visions of meditation in which there is only super-individual polarity ruling all mental and physical activities transcended only in ultimate state of integration, in realization of Śūnyatā (Mahāmudrā) - the Great Seal or Symbol – one of the most important systems of meditation in Tibet.

Advayavajra called Mahāmudrā the eternal female principle, she is not nihsvabhava, she is free from veils covering cognizable objects, she shines forth like a serene sky at noon during autumn, she is the support of all success, she is the identity of Samsāra and Nirvāṇa, her body is compassion unrestricted, she is unique in Great Bliss (Mahāsukhaikarūpa)[14].

Anangavajra said that all women should be enjoyed by the Sādhaka in order to experience the Mahāmudrā, the higher form of love cannot be restricted to a single object and see all female qualities as prajňā-paramītā or transcendental wisdom or the divine mother[15].

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13. Advayavajra: Caturmudra Yuganaddha. S.l.s.t. :34
14. Prajnopaya- vinischaya- siddhi in two Vajrayana works, Gaikwad Oriental Series, No. XLIV: 22
15. Anangavajra: Prajnopaya-vinischaya siddhi, v. 25, Yuganaddha, p. 106 and also in Guhya Samāja Tantra

A Sādhaka who has sexual intercourse with his mother, his sister, his daughter, and his sister's daughter, will easily succeed in his striving for ultimate goal (tattva-yoga). This is a very paradoxical statement found in Anangavajra, Prajňopāya-viniścaya siddhi, and also in Guhya Samāja Tantra, which means that prajňā, the female principle, in association with the active love of a male (sādhaka) can become as complete as the ultimate goal[16].

Similarly in Dhammapada Verse nos. 294 and 295 we find *mātaram pitaram hantvārajāno dveca khattiye rattham sanucaram hantvā anigho yāti brāhmano and mataram pitaram hantvā rajāno dveca sotthiye veyyagghapancamam hantvā anigho yāti brahmano*[17]. In this context it may be remembered that mother stands for craving (tanhā), father for ego (asmimāna), twin warrior kings for twin erroneous views of eternalism (sassata) and annihilationism (uccheda), kingdom (rattha) for five grasping groups of existence, and inhabitants (anucara) for attachment, and Brāhman for a liberated monk or a bhikkhu, anigho for sinlessness, tiger (veyyaggha) for five veils–lust (kamachanda), anger (vyāpāda), restlessness (uddhacca-kukkuccha), laziness (thinamiddha), and wrong view (micchāditthi).

Kingdom also stands for twelve spheres of consciousness (dvādasāyatanani)- eye-form, ear-sound, nose-odour, tongue-taste; body-tactile; and mind-thought.

Thus, having pondered over the heart of Buddhist philosophy it can easily be surmised that ideals of sense-control and renunciation cannot teach incest and licentiousness of tantrism, nor matricide and patricide of Theravada. Yoga terminology condoned that.

In Anangavajra's paradox 'All women in the world' signifies all the elements representing the world including both female and male principles. Four of the female principles form a special group, representing the vital forces (praṇa) of the Great elements (mahābhūta) – earth, water, fire, air and their corresponding psychic centres (cakra) or planes of consciousness within the human body. In each one of them the union of male and female principles must take place, before the fifth and highest stage is reached.

Intercourse with mother (earth), sister (water), fire (daughter) and sister's daughter (air) means fundamental qualities of mahābhūtas. 'Seek union within oneself' said Tilopa in his famous Six Doctrines on which is based the Kagyudpa school method of yoga, which was practiced by Milarepa also.

The vital force of the five aggregates (skandha) in its real nature pertaineth to the masculine aspect of the nerve (ida-nādi). The vital force of the five elements (dhātu) in its real nature

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16. Bhadant Anand Kausalyayan: Dhammapada, Pakinnavaggo canto 21, Verses nos. 294 and 295, Nagpur 1938:70-71

17. Evans-Wentz, W.V.: Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines, p. 200ff

pertaineth to the feminine aspect of the Buddha–principle manifesting through the right psychic nerve (pingala-nādi). As the vital force with these two aspects of it in union, descendeth into the median nerve (suśumna) gradually there cometh the realization and one attains the transcendental boon of the great symbol (mahāmudrā) - the union of male and female principles (as upāya and prajňā) in the highest state of Buddhahood[18].

One has to see the relationship of body and mind, of physical and spiritual interaction in universal perspective, overcoming 'I' and 'mine' and the whole structure of egocentric feelings, opinions, and prejudices which produce illusion of our separate individuality and rise into the sphere of Buddhahood.

Thus Buddhist Tantras are legitimate heirs of Vijňānavādins and Yogācarins (Asaṇga) and the logical and ultimate consequence of the law of dependent origination. In The Four Noble Truths and The Eightfold Path there is nothing exclusively Buddhistic, they are generalizations of framework of Buddha's teachings. The fact of suffering and overcoming it by extinction of desire based on egoism was common ground in Indian religious thought and in other religions as well.

9. GOAL AND WAY OUT

As for the goal and the way out of suffering Tantrayāna as pointed out by Hans Wolfgang Schumann is as shown in the table below:

S.N.	Goal	Way out	Details of School/Branch/founder and place of origin
1	Nibbana	Mantra and Mudrā enabling to identify individual consciousness with base consciousness	Tantrayāna: {A} Mantrayāna, India, Tibet, Sikkim, Bhutan, Mongolia, China, Korea and Japan
2	Nibbana	Identifying oneself with Bodhisattva	{B} Vajrayāna, 3rd CAD, India, Tibet, Sikkim, Bhutan, Mongolia, China, Korea
3	Nibbana	Twinning of Samsāra and Nirvāṇa	{C} Sahajayāna, 8th CAD, India, Tibet, Sikkim, Bhutan, Mongolia
4	Nibbana	Union with Kālacakra Buddha	{D} Kālacakrayāna, 10th CAD, India, Tibet, Sikkim, Bhutan, Mongolia

Although the goal is common to all branches of Buddhist schools their methods vary from the removal of cause through emptiness to identity based on the philosophy of (Vinnānavāda)

18. Schumann, Hans Wolfgang: Buddhism, An Outline of its Teachings and Schools, Boston 1973: 179

consciousness only. Suffering was viewed during the pre-Buddha period as caused, uncaused through eternal (sassatavada) or non-eternal (asassatavada) principles. Buddha assumed suffering and its cause with dynamic nature. Post-Buddha development conceived and continued this changing suffering for one and all through philosophies of (Vijňānavāda) Monism and (Mādhyamika) Absolute consciousness. From the sixth century B.C. to 10th century A.D., almost sixteen centuries sixteen schools of Buddhism originating from India.

To sum up Tantrayāna is a new and the broadest way of philosophy for overcoming the suffering of mankind, embracing all sections of society including the downtrodden, neglected masses, women and children and spanning over animal kingdom and vegetable species as well. To resolve the paradoxes of the Tantrayānic literature there is the method of hermeneutics, which clarifies and explains whatever misunderstanding and mistakes of an ordinary view, which is distinct from an adept's experience. Thus the philosophy and hermeneutics of Buddhist Tantras are twin eyes of the Dharma Body to put it euphemistically. Enter the bound of Samsāra from any opening and you are bound to drop into the boundless Nirvāṇa.

MINATI KAR

Kuṇḍalinī Yoga and the Concept of Devī in Śankāracārya's Saundaryalaharī

KUṆḌALINĪ YOGA

Kuṇḍalinī Yoga is an important aspect of Tantrik discipline. It involves activating the latent spiritual power or Kuṇḍalinī within the individual and guiding it through the psych-physical centres. The main aim of Kuṇḍalinī Yoga is to effect a physical, verbal and mental transformation of one's own being through disciplines that activate the latent divinity, which resides in the human body.

Rousing of Kuṇḍalinī requires a long process of spiritual discipline both physical, mental as well as initiation from the guru known as dīkṣā. Piercing the cakras is the most difficult part of the sādhana. A brief account of the cakras and the nādis will facilitate the readers to have a firsthand knowledge of the technical terms of Tantra, who are not acquainted with them.

There are six Cakras that are conceived as lotuses. They are: Mūlādhāra, Svādhiṣthāna, Maṇipura, Anāhata, Viśuddha, Ājňā. On the petals of these lotuses the letters (vowels and consonants) are inscribed. The seventh lotus is known as Sahasrāra (thousand - petalled). There are 72,000 nādīs. They are not gross but exist in subtle forms. Solar and lunar currents run through these nādīs . Of all these nādīs principal nādīs are fourteen and of them Idā, Piṅgalā and Suṣumnā are the main. Through the power of yoga the prāṇa or life breadth passes through.

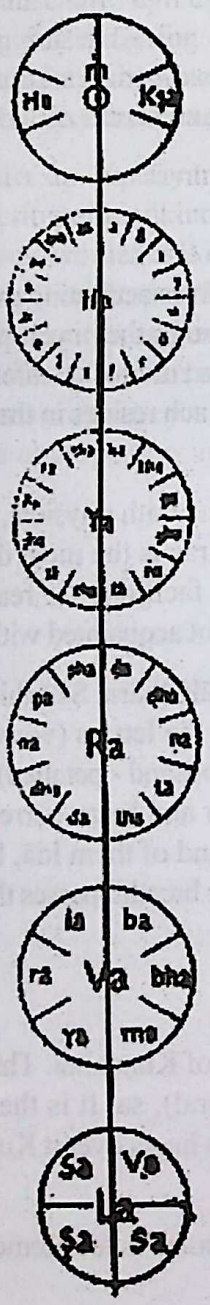
CAKRAS

Mūlādhāra - It is the root of Suṣumnā, which is the resting place of Kuṇḍalinī. This lotus has four petals, letters inscribed on it are va, sa (palatal), sa (cerebral), sa. It is the earth-element (pṛthvītattva) It is the stimulant of smell. Inside lies Svayambhu linga, over it Kuṇḍalinī sleeps in three and half coils.

Svādhiṣthāna - Petals-six, letters inscribed are: ba, bha,ma,ya,ra.la; water element *(ap tattva),* stimulant of taste.

Maṇipura –Petals- ten, letters inscribed are: da,dha, ṇa (cerebral), ta, tha da ,dha, na pa, pha; fire element *(tejas tattva),* stimulant of sense of colour.

CAKRA



Sahasrāra — *seventh cakra*, region : head, 1000 petals, (*satyaloka*)

Ājñā — sixth *cakra*, region : between the eye-brows, 2 petals, letters : *ha* and *kṣa*, stimulate the mind, (*tapoloka*), *ānandamaya kośa*

Viśuddha — fifth *cakra*, region : throat, 16 petals, letters : the vowels—*a, ā, i, ī, u, ū, ṛ, ṛī, ḷṛī, e, ai, o, au, aṁ, aḥ*, element : *ākāśa*, stimulus : hearing, (*janoloka*), vijñānamaya kośa

Añāhata — fourth *cakra*, region : heart, 12 petals, letters : *ka, kha, ga, gha, ṅa, ca, cha, ja, jhaña, ṭa, ṭha*, element : *vāyu*, stimulus : touch, (*maharloka*), *manomaya kośa*

Maṇipura — third *cakra*, region : navel, 10 petals, letters : *ḍa, ḍha, ṇa, ta, tha, da, dha, na, pa, pha*, element : *tejas*, stimulus : colour, (*svarloka*), *manomaya kośa*

Svādhiṣṭhāna — second *cakra*, region : above the genital, 6 petals, letters : *ba, bha, ma, ya, ra, la*, element : *apaḥ*, stimulus : taste, (*bhuvarloka*), *prāṇamaya kośa*

Mūlādhāra — first *cakra*, region : below the genital, 4 petals, letters : *va, śa, ṣa, sa*, element : *pṛthivī*, stimulus : smell, (*bhūrloka*), *annamaya kośa*.

Idea of the diagram of the cakras is taken from Tantra Vidyā

Anāhata-Petals- twelve, letters inscribed are: ka,kha, ga, gha, ńa, ca,cha, ja,jha jňa, ṭa, ṭha; wind element (vāyu tattva), stimulant of touch.

Viśuddha - petals- sixteen, letters inscribed are: the vowels, a, aī, ī, u, ūṛ, ṛ, ḷ,ḷṛ lrī, au, am, ah; space element (ākāśa tattva), stimulant of hearing.

Ājňā -petals –two, letters inscribed are: ha, kṣa; mind element (manastattva).

Sahasrāra—Petals- thousand, above the Ājňā cakra, it has all the letters. This is the abode of Para Śiva, the supreme Bindu.

Nādis: Suṣumnā is fiery red; it represents the central canal. Within it is the lustrous Vajrinī-nādī and within it is Citriṇi nādī. The interior of it is called Brahma nādī . The opening at the end of the Citriṇi nādī is called the door of Brahman *(Brahma-dvāra)*. Through this door the Devī Kuṇḍalinī enters to ascend. She enters all the way to Sahasrāra. This is the termination of the aspirant's journey. Here he enjoys the greatest of pleasure *(paramānanda)*. Kuṇḍalinī then descends to its original position. With the repeated practice by the aspirant Kuṇḍalinī makes a permanent stay with her Lord, the Sadāśiva. The aspirant then is liberated while alive *(jīvanmukta)*.[1]

THE CONCEPT OF DEVĪ

Śańkara, the great Monist seer is very well-known for his commentaries on Upaniṣads and Brahmasūtras. But he is also a great poet and aesthetician. His poetical talent and his views on beauty and mysticism have not been focused and reviewed thoroughly. Śańkara has written many hymns on gods and goddesses, which reveal his devotion. He says that, of all the causes to liberation bhakti or devotion is the greatest. Bhakti to him also means one-pointed concentration of the mind. He has also written many other poems on different topics relating to his theory of non -dualism and how to achieve liberation or mokṣa having obtained the human life. His poetical talent is unveiled in all his poems.

Saundaryalaharī is one of the outstanding poetical compositions of Śańkara, where he blends Tantra, Vedānta and Poetics without deviating from the path of Advaita. There is a controversy whether the renowned seer Śańkara composed this hymn. The commentators Laxmīdhara, Achyutānanda and the eminent scholar Panchānana Tarkaratna, as well as Natarāja Guru have proved beyond apprehension that the author of this hymn is the illustrious seer Śańkara. In this hymn Śańkara has also proclaimed:

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1. The concept of cakras and nādis are based on John Woodroffe's 'The Serpent Power' and the commentary of Laksmīdhara on 'Saundaryalaharī'

dayāvatyā dattam draviḍaśiśur āsvādya tava yat
kavīnaṃ praudhānām ajani kamanīyaḥ kavayitā (75)

'Oh Mother! You being extremely kind fed the Davida child with milk which invigorated him and by its power he became the poet laureate'.

Śaṅkara being an Advaitin declaring falsity of the world accepted Brahman to be the highest reality; but later experienced that the potential power of Sakti is one with the non-dual Brahman. In order to acquire the divine grace of Śakti, he composed the hymn 'Ānandalaharī', the waves of bliss, later the whole hymn was entitled Saundaryalaharī, 'The Upsurge of the billowing Beauty'.

Śaṅkara describes in this hymn the Devī who is none other than the Kuṇḍalinī Kāmakāla. The poet with his verboseness projects Devī's beauty from her lustrous crown to the footstool, as well as her power and grace. Each portrayal becomes a distinct picture where Śaṅkara reveals his powerful diction and poetic imagery with appropriate similes and metaphors.

Śaṅkara opens the hymn with the Tantrik concept:

śivaḥ śaktyā yukto yadi bhavati śaktah prabhavitum
na cedevaṃ devo na khalu kuśalah spanditum api (1)

'Śiva is inert and non-vibrant, when connected with Śakti he becomes active and is able to create, protect and destroy, otherwise he is not able to pulsate'.

Śaṅkara is a votary of Śṛīcakra. The Commentators have given the following interpretation of Śiva and Śakti:

1. Śiva = four triangles with their cones facing upwards
   Śakti= five triangles with their cones facing downwards.

These nine triangles make up Śṛīcakra

2. Śiva = consonants, Śakti = vowels
   Śiva conjoined with Śakti is capable of explicating the Vedas.

3. Śiva = ham, Śakti = sah, together form the Hamsa- mantra or Ajapāmantra, which through sādhana or inner discipline changes to so'ham or 'I am That'.

The poet says, The Devī is all powerful. One speck of dust from her feet (*tanīyāṃsaṃ pāmsum tava caraňpankeruhabhavaṃ, 2*) is enough to create the whole universe by Brahmā. Viṣṇu as the serpent Ananta holds it on his head. At the time of dissolution Śiva takes the ashes to anoint his body.

The side-glance of the Devī (*kṛpākatakṣa*) fulfills the desire of everyone who worships her.

dhanuḥ pauṣpaṃ maurvī madhukaramayī pañca viśikhā
vasantaḥ sāmanto malaya-marudāyodhanarathaḥ
tathā'pyekaḥ sarvaṃ himagiri-sute kām api kṛpām
apāṅgāt te labdhvā jagad idam anango vijayate (6)

'Oh Mother! Obtaining a side glance from you, Kāmadeva being without limbs conquers the world with the flowery bow, bow-string made of bumble –bees, five flowery darts, taking Spring *(vasanta)* as the minister and southern breeze as the chariot'.

The theme of this hymn is beauty. To portray this beauty Śaṅkara has employed many similes. Comparisons are mostly with lotus, rainbow, *cakora* bird, and the crescent moon. Dawn, dusk, the morning sun (valātapa) and the colour 'aruṇa' or magenta is portrayed in the background to give a kaleidoscopic nuance to the beauty to be depicted. The poet also delineates on the mysticism that is focused in the divine love-play between Śiva and Śakti.

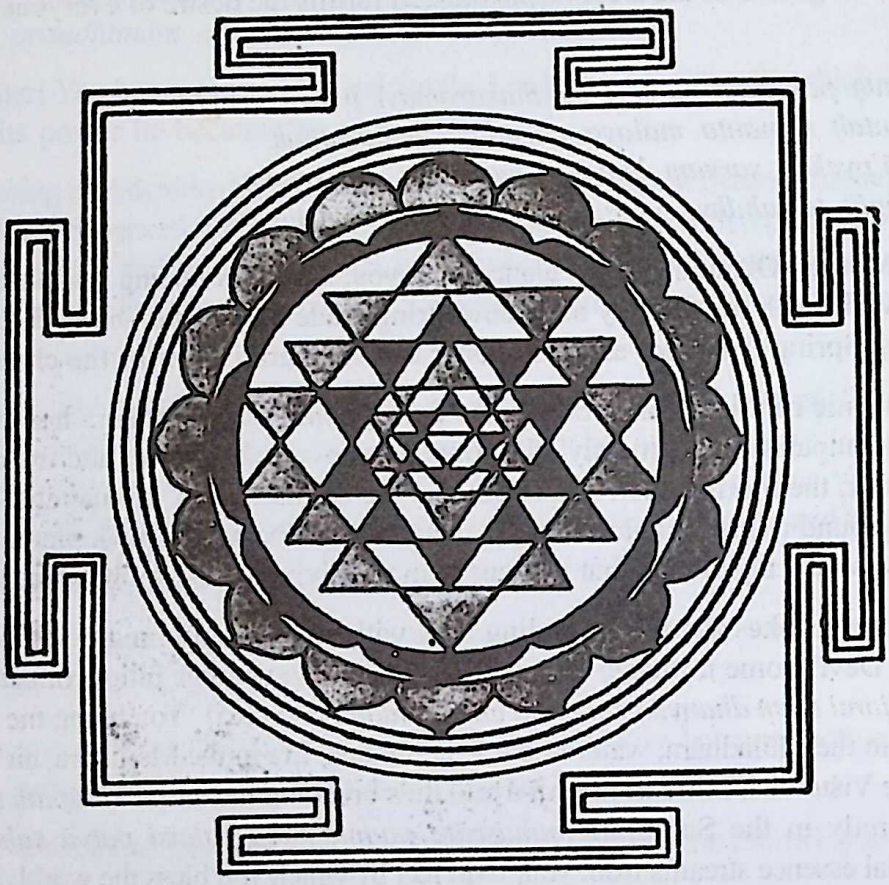
The poet evokes the Devī, holding bow with arrow, noose and goad to appear before him. 'Oh Devī! Some fortunate ones worship you as the upsurge billow of beauty and mental joy' [*bhajanti tvāṃ dhanyāḥ katicana cidānandalaharīm* (8)] 'You being the Kuṇḍalinī, you are earth in the Mūlādhāra, water in the Svādhiṭhāna, fire in the Maṇipura, air in the Anāhata, sky in the Viśuddha, mind in the Ājñā and thus breaking the entire *kulapath* sport with your Lord secretly in the Sahasrāra'(*sahasrāre padme saha rahasi patyā saha viharase 9*). 'Ambrosial essence streams from your twin feet by which you bless the world. Again returning in the snake- form of three and half coils (*bhujaganibham adhyuṣṭa valayaṃ*), you sleep in the hollow of the *kulakuṇda.*' [*svapiṣi kulakuṇḍe kuhariṇi* (10)].

It is said in the Vāmakeśvara Tantra that Śakti (Kulakuṇḍalinī) first pierces the knot of Rudra *(rudragranthi)*, secondly the knot of Viṣṇu *(viṣṇugranthi)* and lastly the knot of Brahmā *(brahmāgranthi)*. Thus piercing the six lotuses sport with Śiva in the thousand-petalled lotus (*sahasrāre kamale śaktaih śiven saha modate*). The upward and downward movement of Kuṇḍalinī suggests the devotee's meditation indicative of his experienced beauty.

Devī's beauty is unparalleled. The poet says:

tvadiyaṃ saundaryaṃ tuhina giri kanye tulayituṃ
kavīndrāḥ kalpante katham api viriñchī prabhṛtayaḥ (12)

'Oh Devī! The greatest of the poets pondering to create your portrait of beauty can characterize it partially with great effort'. In reality beauty can only be described by poetic intuition. The non-materialistic beauty of the highest Consciousness can be described only by



ŚRĪ-CAKRA

(The Śrī-Cakra is the yantric depiction of the Divine Mother)
(Oh! Devī, Your) angles of abode are forty four in number. There are four wheels of auspiciousness. Five different wheels of power. Nine basic roots of nature. Three encircling lines encasing eight and sixteen petals.

negation. In this hymn the Devī described as the highest Consciousness, being the extreme limit of beauty from the advaitic stance is transformed from form to formless. The beauty is dazzlingly bright, brighter than the sun and other luminaries but soft like the moonbeam. It is of the colour *aruṇa* and is seen by the yogis alone in meditation.

Employing intuitive poetic imagery Śaṅkara describes the beauty of the Devī:

'Oh Mother! You are white as the autumnal moonbeams with matted hair on your head decorated with the crescent moon, your hands bear the boon-giving gesture, refuge, rosary

of crystal beads and book. How could one become a great poet without worshipping you even once'(*sakṛn na tvā natvā katham iva satāṃ saṃ nidadhate.....bhaṇitayaḥ (15)*. The waves of beauty described here rest on the matted hair decorated by the diadem emitting streaks of light like the moonbeams.

kavīndrānāṃ cetaḥ-kamalavana-bālātapa-rucim
bhajante ye santaḥ katicidaruṇām eva bhavatīm

viriñci preyasyas taruṇatara-sṛṅgāralaharī
gabhīrābhir vāgbhir vidadhati satāṃ rañjanam ami (16)

'Oh Devī! You reside in the minds of the superior poets resembling the lotus forest, kissed by the rising sun at dawn. Your colour is aruṇa (magenta). Those saints who worship you in this glorious form, they delight the assembly of wise men with their poetic diction. This enunciation overflows with the erotic sentiment being devoid of vulgarity'.

The nobility of eroticism in this verse is illustrated by the word gabhīra, and śṛṅgāra. The poet intends to show that meditating on the transcendental glory (aruṇa) of the Devī the superior poets are able to compose profound erotic poetry elevated to the mystical heights.

Here we can reflect on two types of men, a superior poet proclaiming aesthetic values and the connoisseur (sahṛdaya), who would receive the reflection in him projected by the poet. The poet uses a superb simile when he says,' when at dawn the golden rays of the sun kiss the petals of the blooming lotuses" to illustrate the beauty of the colour *aruṇa*.'

The commentator Laxmīdhara remarks: 'When the yogi meditates on the '*aruṇa*' colour of the Devī, she being of the nature of matṛkāvarṇas appears as Sarasvatī. Through the meditation on the colour *aruṇa* which has the predominance of śṛṅgāra rasa the amorous words of highest value flows out from him (*aruṇavarṇadhyānamahimnā śṛṅgārarasaprādhānyena bagvilasapravṛtti*).

The poet says that the Devī's luster is like the brilliance of the sun at dawn, which pervades the sky and the earth (*sarvām urvīm aruṇima-nimagnām, 18*). The devotee who meditates on the absolute beauty of the Devī, then no wonder many celestial nymphs would come under his control. The implication is at this stage the Yogi's divine experience is totally pervaded by beauty.

According to the implication of the commentator Kāmakāla is in essence Mahātripurāsundarī. As she resides in the three bindus she is designated as Tripurāsundarī. The Kāmakāla is of the nature of Supreme Brahman. Though she is without any parts she is of the nature of all the mātṛkavarṇas. The three bindus are filled with the ambrosia of all knowledge. She bestows the power of speech as well as fulfills the desire of her worshipper. The essence of Kāmakāla

is to be known from the preceptor. Meditating on Kāmakāla one frees oneself of the transmigration of birth and death'.

The poet has also described the essence of Kāmakāla who is identified with Mahātripurāsundarī. The Yogi freeing his mind from the delusion of ignorance perceives Devī's subtle form like the lightening bedecked body made of Sun, Moon and Fire in the thousand petalled lotus. They experience the upsurge of the billow of supreme delight'. *mahāntah paśyanto dadhati paramāhlādalaharīm (21)*

tvyā hṛtvā vāmaṃ vapur apritrptena manasā
śarīrārdhaṃ śambhor aparam api śaṅke hṛtam abhūt
yad etat tvadrūpaṃ sakalam aruṇābhaṃ trinayanaṃ
kucābhyām ānamraṃ kuṭilaśasi cūdāla makuṭam (23)

'Oh Devī! I have an apprehension in my mind that you by absorbing the left half of Śiva's body and still being unsatisfied have engulfed the other half of Śiva's body. Your whole body is now crimson. You now have three eyes; your body is slightly bent. You had half moon on your crown now you have the full moon on your head.'

This reveals that Śaṅkara is gradually moving from duality to non-duality. The Devī was first depicted as ardhanarīśvara (half male and half female) but later she remains as the eternal feminine principle. According to the Uttra Kaula tradition Śakti is one and only one feminine principle, the male principle śiva is included in śakti. The poet says, 'Oh Devī! The six cakras in the form of the lotuses are your subtle form; you in order to manifest yourself in the universal form though you are Pure Consciousness, you portray yourself as the bride of Śiva'. (*cidānandākāram śivayuvati bhāvena bibhṛṣe 35*)

'Oh Devī! I bow to the primordial Śakti with Śiva, who is crystal clear like the sky in the Viśuddha cakra'. Here the Primordial Śakti and Sadāśiva have the parity of status. With the luster like moonbeams, she sports like the female partridge with great fervor in the mind of the yogis, whose hearts are purified. (*vidhūtāntardhvānta vilasati cakorīva jagatī, 37*)

samunmīlat-samvit-kamala-makarandaika-rasikam
bhaje haṃsa dandvam kimapi mahatāṃ mānasa-caram (38)

In this verse we get a picture of twin swans (Śiva and Śakti) swimming in the lotus pond. The poet says,' I bow to the twin swans intent on enjoying the nectar of the lotus blooming in the minds of the great ones in the Anāhata Cakra. In Ājña Cakra reside all luminous Parama Śiva and the Cit Śakti, to whom I bow devoutly. Praying to them with devotion the yogis reside in the lustrous abode where the rays of the sun, moon or other luminaries cannot penetrate'(*nirātanke loko nivasati hi bhāloka bhavane, 36*)

Next the poet moves on to the image of the Devī to be worshipped. Through his poetic skill he describes the Devī in a more tangible form.

gatair māṇikyaṭvam gaganamaṇibhih sāndra ghatitam
kiritaṃ te haimaṃ himagiri-sute kīrtayati yaḥ
sa nīdeyacchāyācchuraṇa śabalaṃ candrśakalaṃ
dhanuḥ śaunasīraṃ kim iti na nibadhnāti dhiṣaṇām (42)

'Oh Daughter of the Mountain! There are twelve suns (ādityas), the gem of the sky adorning your crown, which are amalgamated with clear crystal gems. Is it possible for anybody to describe this beauty? When the golden crown is reflected on the moon will it not generate the fallacy of a rainbow?'

The poet's employment of the simile of a rainbow is a unique way of expressing the beauty of the golden crown. The archetype of rainbow in the sky, as well as the portrayal of sunset, sunrise, moonset and moonrise has given solace to many poets from time immemorial. The glory of the rainbow also illustrates the upsurge of beauty.

lalātaṃ lāvaṇya-dyuti-vimalamābhāti tava yat
dvitīyaṃ tanmanye makuṭa-ghatitam candraśakalam
viparyāsanyāsadubhayam api sambhūya ca mithaḥ
sudhālepasyūtiḥ pariṇamati rāka-himakaraḥ (46)

'Oh Devī! Discerning your captivating resplendent forehead assumption arises as if it is the second crescent of the other moon fixed on your tiara. Both the crescents are in reversed position and connected one to one which postulates to be the full moon that is besmeared with ambrosia.'

In this description the resplendence of the jewels spread a mystical spell over the mind. Delineation on the full moon projects the advaitic doctrine as well as absolute beauty.

tanotu ksemaṃ nastava vadana saundaryalaharī
parīvāhasrotaḥ saraṇiriva sīmantasaraṇiḥ
vahanatī sidūraṃ pravalakavarībhara timira-
dviṣām bṛndairbandī kṛtam iva navīnārkakiraṇam (44)

Devī's face has the upsurge billow of attractiveness. The parting of the hairline gives the impression of an out flowing stream. The parting is bedecked with Vermillion. This gives the impression that the out flowing black hair representing the darkness has imprisoned the new rising sun in the horizon. This verse projects very clearly the allurement of the Devi. The poet also prays to the Devi, the extreme limit of beauty and bliss to efface the dark ignorance of everybody's mind. *(dhunotu dhvāntaṃ nas...43)*.The implication is, the darkness of avidyā

ARDHANARĪŚVARA
Śiva and Pārvatī
(Artist: Jiban Acharya)

or ignorance veils the mind of every mortal being, just as the clouds hide the glory of the sun. It is only through the long endeavor of sādhanā or spiritual discipline that the ignorance can be removed. The main aim of Śaṅkara's philosophy is to realize the non-dual Brahman when avidyā is removed.

The fragrance of flowers, the luster of jewels, the white moonbeams, the golden rays of the sun, the crimson-petal of lotus flowers are the entities whose beauty is to be enjoyed. The poet with his verbose diction using these entities as similes in many places projects Devī's beauty. The poet sketches the charm of Devi's face which ridicules the glamour of the lotus (*parītaṃ te vaktraṃ parihasati paṅkeruharuchim 45).*

darasmere yasmin daśanarucikñjalkarucire
sugandhau mādyanti smaradahana-cakşur-madhulihaḥ (45)

'Oh Devī! Your white teeth slightly seen by the gentle smile being surrounded by your curly locks emerge stunning to the eyes, similar to lotus flowers. The three eyes being frenzied resembling the bumblebees of the Eros-burner fall on your face'. The blackness of the bumblebees, black locks of hair and black eyes (*netrābhyāṃ madhukararucibhyāṃ, 47*) are projected by the poet for manifesting the brightness of the Devī's face.

Śaṅkara addressing the Devī says, 'Oh Devī! You dispel the fear of the mortal beings. Your slightly arched eye-brows seem to be the bow of Kāmadeva, the eyes representing the bee-like beauty are his bow-string (*bhruvau bhugne kiñcid ....dhanur manye savyetarakaragṛhītam ratipateḥ ,47*). Your right eye and the left eye are in essence the sun creating the days and the moon creating the nights. The half open third eye ressemble the half-open lotus bud generating twilight' *(samādhatte sandhyāṃ divasaniśayor antaracarīm,* 48).

The literary critics have established nine rasas (sentiments). They are: śṛṅgāra (love), vibhatsa (disgust), raudra (anger), adbhūta (wonder), bhāyanaka (fear), vīra (heroism), *hāsya* (laughter), karuṇa (compassion) and śanta (composed). The poet recounts these emotions in a stimulating way depicting Devī's miscellaneous sentiments. The poet explicates these rasas in the Devī's glance.

The poet says: 'Oh Devī! Your glance towards Śiva is steeped in love, concerning others it depicts disgust, with regard to Gaṅgā (the river, whom Śiva holds in the head) it expresses anger, performances of Girişa (Śiva) suggests wonder, with respect to snakes on your Lord Maheśa (Śiva) reveals fear, victorious to the beauty of the lotuses suggests heroism, towards female friends discloses jesting pleasure, let that glance reveal compassion towards me'(*mayi janani dṛṣṭih-sakaruṇā, 51).*

The commentator says according to Bharata (the compiler of Nātyaśāstra*)* there are eight rasas or sentiments, as Śānta is without any agitation (vikāra) so he deals with eight rasas.

'Where there is no sorrow, no happiness, no thought no anger and attachment, not any desire, is explicated as santa by the greatest of sages.'

Devī has dazzling large eyes touching the ears. Her eyes are always compassionate and protecting the devotees. These eyes cast side-glances without giving up the base of the ears. These ears are cheered by the play of the nine aesthetic rasas written by the great poets. The poet then relates Devī's tongue.

abiśrantaṃ patyur guṇa-gṇna-kathāmreḍana-japā
japā-puṣpacchāya tava janani jihvā jayati sā (64)

'Incessantly glorifying the virtues of your lord, your tired tongue assumes the luster of the red hibiscus flower which has reached its highest excellence. Sarasvatī of white luster has become crimson red.'

The poet intends to bring to light that incessantly uttering the virtues of the Lord is actually worshipping her with unuttered words. Sarasvatī resides in the tip of the tongue, she is imagined to be without colour, but assumes the red colour reflected on it, this is where the highest beauty is experienced.

The poet compares the Devī's neck with a lotus stalk. (*mukhakamalanālaśriyam iyam,* 68). The lotus stalk has bristles. The Devī's neck is akin to the lotus stalk being horripilate by the touch of Śambhu. The stalk actually is white but becomes gray due to the mixing with mud and dirt. Similarly Devī's pearl necklace smudged with the cosmetic paste resembles a lotus stalk (*kālāgurubahulajambālamalinā...hāralatikā, 68)*. This is also a very innovative simile. Three lines on the throat are signs of good fortune in a woman, which is very prominent in Devī. It is also indicative of Devī's musical voice that surpasses all the sweet singing birds and musicians. Śiva once had severed Brahmā's head. Being frightened of Siva's rage, the lotus- born, God Brahmā with his four heads sings in praise of the Devī's four lotus-core hands granting refuge. (*mṛṇalīmṛdvīnām tava bhujalatānāṃ catasṛṇāaṃ,caturbhiḥ saundaryaṃ sarasija-bhavaḥ stauti vadanaiḥ,70)*

nakhānāmudyotair nava nalinarāgam vihasatām
karāṇāṃ te kāntiṃ kathya kathayāmaḥ katham ume
kayācid vā sāmayam bhajatu kalayā hanta kamalam
yadi krīḍallakṣmī caraṇatala-lākṣā-rasacanṇam (71)

'Oh Umā ! Tell us how we will portray the magnificence of your hands and the splendor of your finger- nails, which ridicules the luster of the newly bloomed lotus at dawn. Only if Lakṣmī (Goddess of Prosperity) dances on the lotus with her crimson color painted feet then somehow there could be a parity with the brilliance of your hands.'

The poet here addresses the Devī as Umā, she herself has to communicate to him the grandeur of herself. Devī herself can recount absolute beauty. Umā has different shades of meaning. She is all complete by herself, the highest Consciousness. She represents the non-dual supreme value, which has deep ontological importance. Śaṅkara's approach of non-dualistic philosophy is to move in a negative way, eliminating the extraneous. The Upaniṣadic concept is to arrive at the source of all manifestations by means of negating them as not this, not this or *neti ,neti*. In this verse we also notice the alliteration of the word *ka,* which is also a poetic embellishment.

śrutīnāṃ mūrdhāno dadhati tava yau śekharatayā
mamāpyetau mātah śirasi dayayā dhehi caraṇau
yayoh pādyaṃ pāthaḥ paśupati-jaṭā-juṭa-tatinī
yayor lākṣālakṣmīraruṇaharicūdāmaṇirucih (84)

'Oh Mother! Your twin feet are revered by the Śrutis and worn as a crest jewel on their head, place thy feet on my head. The crescent moon on the head of Chandraśekhera (Śiva) assumes the red colour from the reflection of your feet decorated with the red lacquer.'

Śaṅkara puts high value to Mother's lotus feet. He speaks of three sets of lotuses. Devastated by snow the lotus blooming in the lake; the lotus born in the lake closed at night; and the lotus is the abode of Lakṣmī. But Devī's lotus-feet are adept in walking in the snowy peak, whether at night or in daytime, they are ever alert and unlike Lakṣmī, it is the location of all worshippers.

namovākaṃ brūmo nayanaramaṇīyāya padyos-
tavāsmai dvandvyāya sphuṭa-ruci-rasālaktaka vate (85)

'Let us proclaim with words that we offer salutation to these twin feet appearing ravishingly effulgent to the eyes brilliantly coloured with lacquer.'

The poet then amorously brings in Kāmadeva, Īśana's (Śiva's) foe, who long suppressed his bitter resentment against Śiva; as Śiva ever obstructed his intentions. When Devī kicks Śiva's forehead then Kāmadeva glorifies his victory by ringing the jingle bells in her feet (*tulākoṭi-kvānaiḥ kilikilitamīśānaripuṇā*, 86). Lord Śiva purposely called her by a wrong name as he had longed for this kick from her magenta coloured feet.

Devī's feet have the quality to bestow plenty to the needy and it mocks the luster of the wish-fulfilling tree. The poet also compares Devī's feet with the cluster of *mandāra* flowers. They are auspicious, bestow wealth, scatters honey and beauty (*saundaryam prakara makaranda-vikirati, 90*).

gatās te mañcatvaṃ druhiṇaharirudreśvara bhṛtaḥ
śivaḥ svacchacchāyāghaṭitakapaṭa pracchada paṭaḥ
tvadīyānaṃ bhāsāṃ pratiphalanarāgāruṇatayā
sarīrī sṛṅgāro rasa iva dṛsām dogdhi kutukam (92)

'Oh Mother! You are sitting on a couch of which the four gods Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra and Īśvara are the footstools. On the throne lies Śiva. He is wearing an imaginary canopy similar to the luster of transparent crystal. Your radiance reflected on Paraśiva has taken the shade of crimson red. He seems to be the incarnation of erotic mood. This looks pleasing to the eyes of the viewers.' The great poets consider erotic sentiment as crimson in colour. Here also Śaṅkara projects himself as a mystic poet.

girām ahur devīṃ druhiṇagṛhinīm āgamavido
hareḥ patnīṃ padmāṃ harasahacarīmadritanayām
turiyā kāpi tvaṃ duradhigama nīhsimamahimā
mahāmāya viśvaṃ bhramayasi parabrahma mahiṣi (97)

'Oh The queen of Supreme Brahman! Knowers of the Vedas call you the wife of Brahmā (the creator), they call you Padmā, the wife of Viṣṇu (the protector), they call you the mountain daughter as Śiva's consort. But you as a mysterious fourth entity with inaccessible ultimate splendor dazzle the universe.

The poet also delineates on the Devī's lacquer smeared feet. He says 'Oh Mother! I am a secker of wisdom, tell me, when I can drink the ambrosial water that has washed your magenta coloured feet? Even those who are born dumb and mute become conscious poets by drinking that water. The goddess of speech drinks that water assuming it to be betel juice (98).' Washed water of the Devī's feet is coveted by the seekers of ultimate truth, opines the commentator Lakṣmīdhara. Śaṅkara here with all humility submits himself to the Devī, the epitome of beauty.

The poet has prayed to the Devī in so many ways. 'Oh Mother! You graciously bathe me with your far reaching glance, beautiful like the blue lotus just opening, may it bless me and enable me to reach the *summum bonum* of existence. This will not affect you in any way' (*anenāyaṃ dhanyo bhavati na ca hānir iyatā, 57)*.

'Your twin feet always give wealth to the devout devotees, from it endlessly bubbles beauty like honey. It emits unceasing charm like a bouquet of celestial flowers (*pārijāta*). Let me assume the form of six-footed bee-hood and get immersed in your feet with my inner organs' (*tavasmin....yātu caraṇe nimajjan majjivaḥ karaṇacaraṇaḥ ṣaṭcaranatām*, 90). The bee sucks honey from the flowers so it can be called a *bhoktā* or enjoyer who is enjoying the honey called *bhogya*. But here the poet wants to show in the advaitic way with the analogy

of the six-footed bee that is in total absorption in the radiant lotus. Hence the twin aspect of enjoyer (*bhokta*) and enjoyed (*bhogya)* is eliminated. When the mind with the sense-organs is totally withdrawn in the Self then the objective world gets deleted, then and then only the individual soul merges with the Supreme.

Lastly the poet extols the Devī by saying, 'Your devotee sports with learning and riches lives with a dazzling body freed from bondage and spell of ignorance, and enjoys the essence of supreme bliss' (*parānandābhikhyaṃ rasayati rasaṃ tvad-bhajanavān, 99).*

Śaṅkara is a monist poet. The upsurge of beauty, which is described in Saundaryalaharī is the beauty in its highest vertical limit that is one bliss aspect of Pure Consciousness, described as the Devī with form. Basically Śaṅkara's intention is to move from form to formless. Thus on analysis of the hymn we visualize how Śaṅkara blends Tantra and Vedānta in an unique way postulating the beauty of the Devi highlighting her glory in the colour magenta (*aruṇa)*. The inner discipline of Tantra which culminates in the unity of Śiva and Śakti; the inner discipline of Vedānta also culminates in the realization of Brahman, the Pure Consciousness. Hence Devī who is also Pure Consciousness is one with Brahman, the Supreme Reality. This oneness is the aim of final realization.

Lastly the poet stoops before the Devī and expresses with all humility:

pradīpajvālabhir divasa-kara-nīrājana-bidhiḥ,
sudhāsuteś candropala-jvalavir arghyaracanā
savkiyair ambobhih salilanidhisauhityakaraṇam
tvadīyābhir vāgvhis tava janani vācāṃ stutir iyam (100)

'Oh Mother! You pervade the whole universe with your effulgent lustrous rays. This hymn has been composed in your praise with words originated from you. This is like propitiating the sun with the lighted lamps, offering oblation to the moon with water oozing out from the moon- stone, appeasing the sea with its own water.'

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ANDREA LOSERIES

REVIEW

DAVID SEYFORT RUEGG: THE SYMBIOSIS OF BUDDHISM WITH BRAHMANISM IN SOUTH ASIA AND OF BUDDHISM WITH 'LOCAL CULTS' IN TIBET AND THE HIMALAYAN REGION*

Generally, all three great religious systems of India, the Jains, Buddhist and Hindus, developed well-filled pantheons, and it is not always easy to decide to which of these three systems a particular image should be assigned as free and frequent interchanges took place. At the very outset of Buddhism and Jainism both systems borrowed Hindu gods in their earlier stages, while in the Tantrik age mostly Buddhist deities were incorporated, f.i Tārā, Vajrayoginī and Chinnamastā. But what accounts to the fact? Is it the tolerance of Buddhism? Or may we speak of a common pan-Indian religious ground?

Or may we speak of a confrontational inclusivism due to close but somehow hostile contacts between Hindu/Brahmanical strata and Buddhists?

One of the mayor tasks of Indo-Tibetan and Buddhist Studies is the research on the various layers of syncretistic absorption or integration of Hinduism and local cults in Tibet and the Himalayan region. David Seyfort Ruegg has devoted many years of studies to this topic. The recent publication of the Academy of Sciences, Vienna, is a precious revision of previous articles by the author, which have been now made accessible in a condensed and well-annotated edition at an affordable prize for students and research scholars alike. It gives answer to all questions raised above and challenges the widely spread view maintained even by modern writers on the basis of iconographical depictions of superordinate Buddhist deities, of them they are many.

In Buddhist scriptures the term 'Hinduism' does not appear. Only the word tīrthika *(mu stegs pa)* is used, a relation which seemed to have been historically and philosophically a rivalry. Within the fold of Indian Civilizations philosophical debates and magic power competitions were going on as inter-school controversies since ancient times. But it was Buddhism, which articulated the principles and rules of debate, applying it uniquely also in intra-school debates, where it became a methodological tool for bringing clarity into philosophisation and for accommodating new ideas and change framework of understanding and interpretations.

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When we speak of Buddhist Iconography, it has to be understood that it is not idolatry. The images do not represent objects of worship, but represent the highest Buddhist ideals of Śūnyatā *(stong pa nyid)* or Void and Mahāsukha *(bde ba chen po)*, Great Bliss.

Moreover, the Buddhists are more scientific than the Hindus in the matter of determining the hierarchy of their deities, as all of them emanated from the Five Buddha Families, and the images of such emanations invariably bear the effigies of their Buddha Family on their head or crown or aureole behind.

David Seyfort Ruegg is asking, what are the status and significance of the divine beings, celestial and daemonic, which appear at certain levels in Buddhist thought and religion. These entities do not belong strictly and exclusively to Buddhism alone because their counterparts or namesakes are found also in what we now term 'Hinduism' or 'Brahmanism'. What are then the status and significance of these entities within the so-called 'Buddhism', and how exactly do they relate to their Brahmanical/Hindu namesakes and counterparts?

The reviewer of this publication herself has been pursuing the question of syncretism on Buddhist Vajrayāna since a number of years, developing ideas reflected in several papers and lectures in and outside of India. It was only in May 2008 at Vienna University, when giving a talk on *Cakrasamvara and Syncretism in the Northwestern Himalaya* that Prof. Dr. Ernst Steinkellner, who graciously attended my talk, pointed out that the term 'Syncretism' had been discussed widely in the fresh publication of David Seyfort Ruegg, in print only since April 2008, and that I better had a look at it.

What first stroke me is the title itself, where Ruegg speaks of 'The Symbiosis' rather the Syncretism or layers of Buddhism with/in Brahmanism/Hindusim.

After analyzing the various explanations for the presence within Buddhism of the namesakes and counterparts of Brahmanical/Hindu divinities as belonging to a common ground, a 'substratum' shared by both Buddhism and the ambient religions in India, as opposed to the 'borrowing model', where both are regarded as two separate religious systems, Ruegg draws attention to the fact that most divinities were classified in Buddhist thought as belonging to the 'worldly', mundane (laukika, *'Jig rten)* level, or to the transmundane (lokottara, *'jig rten gi 'das pa)* to which belong those entities that have a true soteriological and gnoseological function on the Buddhist wisdom path to liberation.

Both are complimentary and at the same time vertically, hierarchically structured.

A section in the Mahāvyutpatti (no. 3111- 3172) lists some 61 'wordly' gods *('jig rten pa'I lha)* beginning with Brahma Hiranyagarbha *(Tshangs pa dbyig gi snying po)* till Vighna *(bGegs)*, others list Nāgas, Yakśas including Vaiśravāṇa, Gandharvas, Garudas, Kinnaras etc.

From the Buddhist point they all have not yet transgressed Samsara, the Cycle of Suffering based on the law of connection between actions and their maturation.

The transmundane entities are wisdom emanations of the Buddhas or Tathāgatas who have transgressed Samsāra, who on their basis of their commitments have a liberating effect on the beings in the world.

At time *laukika* beings move within the hierarchical structure and transform to lokottara deities or wisdom protectors when bound under oath, while others – although bound by spells – remain as 'worldly guardians' in the entourage of the wisdom protector.

Gods such as Brahmā and Indra are mentioned already in the Buddhist canonical sources, which speaks for a common pan-Indian ground or substratum, in the same way as local gods or goddesses etc. of Tibetan and Mongolian folk religious substrata were successfully included or integrated in the Buddhist Tantrik Pantheon.

Ruegg defines three distinct interpretations of the relation between Buddhism and Brahmanism/ Hinduism and of entities of the lokottara level in relation to those of the *laukika* level: (1) the 'substratum model', (ii) the 'borrowing model', and (iii) a secular and historistic interpretation of the schema representing the agonistic or hostile relation between 'Buddhism vs. Hinduism'. Although theoretically (i) and (ii) opposable, they are not entirely exclusive of each other. As for the agonistic view (iii), Ruegg maintains, that it is of course possible that the structured opposition laukika: lokottara, one superordinate to the other, has on occasion been understood or misunderstood in terms of historical-secular hostility, as has indeed happened in India where icons depicting a divine being dancing or trampling on another entity are sometimes explained in just this fashion. This view has been adopted uncritically also by art historians who speak of 'Hindu' gods being treaded on and humiliated.

This controversial relation is discussed in 24 essays or chapters, with evidence from some Mahāyana Sūtras and Śāstras, from Kriyātantra and some Yogatantras. Also Vaiśnava and Śaiva elements in the Kālacakratantra and the role of Kalkin therein is discussed, as well as the subordination of the laukika level in the Mandala structure not as a vertical juxtaposition but horizontal peripheralization is clarified.

Ruegg sees in the 'emic' laukika : lokattara structure a useful interpretive schema, as valid as the concepts of interreligious borrowing, syncretism, fusion, relativism, indifferentism or Paul Hacker's inclusivism. The laukika: lokattara schema corresponds to a vertical, two-layered, symbiosis of Buddhism and ambient Indian or Tibetan etc. religion, with Buddhism in its lokottara aspect constituting the upper, superordinate, level. In the Introduction Ruegg adds: 'In view of the fact that communication and a passage between the two levels are open, it is possible to speak of an intercommunicating bi-level symbiosis and transfigurative accommodation.'

In the conclusion David Seyfort Ruegg sums up that the idea of a laukika divinity could be (i) a projection or emanation (nirmaṇa, *sprul pa)* of a lokottara being, (ii) a respectful submission to the lokottara entity, and (3) a forcible subjugation. Submission and subjugation are associated with a commitment *(*samvara, *sdom pa)* or promise *(dam bca')* to protect the Teachings after having been 'tamed' *('dul ba)* or trained for the Path of liberation. He emphasizes the soteriological perspective; by transforming the laukika into the lokottara, as well as the noumenal *(ye shes pa)* of the lokottara may be invited by ritual and yogic means to descend to the phenomenal *(dam tshig pa)* or conventional level of the practitioner. They are not fixed and frozen entities. 'But their relation involves very much more than infiltration, borrowing, syncretism or inclusivism. Rather pertinent are the ideas of symbiosis and a common ground, or substratum, one on the basis of which intertextuality and intericonogaphicity (and indeed borrowing) may have operated in certain cases.'

What makes Ruegg's study outstanding is his surveying the source material from an emic perspective that gives justice to the implicit meanings of Tantrik texts and their hermeneutics. The detailed Appendices on Hinduistic elements in Tibetan Buddhism and Bon sources (I) and on The Noetic and the Conventional (II) as well as the Indeces which include Sanskrit, Pāli and Tibetan key-words and Japanese terms, make this compressed booklet of 195 pages a must for students and researchers of Indo-Tibetan Studies, Philosophy and Comparative Religion, as well as Art Historians, for critical scrutiny of their – particular in India widely spread -- dominant agnostic views on the topic.

PRAJNALANKAR BHIKKHU

Bodhipathapradīpa and its Importance in Tibetan Buddhism

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND TO *BODHIPATHAPRADĪPA*

The majority people of Tibet appear to have received but not accepted Indian Buddhism in the 7th century CE. Despite the adoption of the faith by the 33rd King of Tibet, Srong bTsen sGam po (617-693 CE), through the instrumentality of his two Buddhist queens, Princess Wenche'eng of China and Princess Bhṛkuti of Nepal, and despite a major success of his initiative to propagate the Dharma in his country with the help of his able and learned Minister Thon-mi Sam-bhota, Bon, the indigenous religion of Tibet, continued to be a significant religious force for about one century until the reign of King Khri srong lde btsan (742-798 CE). And the followers of Bon, the Bonpos, in fact, offered a strong resistance to Buddhism defying the King Khri srong lde btsan's proclamation enjoining all the followers of Bon to give up their faith and adopt Buddhism.[1] The Heretical Bon teacher Rin chen mchog became a staunch enemy of Buddhism. As part of their attempt to defend their faith he along with his followers and other Bon-pos grossly plagiarized Buddhist texts such as Prajnāpāramitā, Mahāsandhi *(rDzogs pa chen po)* etc. secretly and claimed these texts to be genuine 'scriptures' of Bon.[2] Such attempt generated confusion and doubt among the common people about Buddhism and resulted in serious degeneration of the Dharma. It necessitated the king to pass a royal order to persecute the Bonpos.[3] Consequently many Bonpos were killed and many Bon teachers were forced to conceal their scriptures that came to be known later as the *Bon gter ma* ('The Hidden Treasures of the Bonpos').[4] Besides, Bon teachers made a certain epidemic which has broken out in the country at that time a political issue by misreading it to the common masses as an evil consequence of the propagation of the Dharma by an alien teacher, the great Indian Ācārya Śāntarakśita, and taking undue advantage of it they seem to have succeeded in mobilizing a popular revolt against Buddhism which eventually led the king to advise Ācārya Śāntarakśita to leave the country, at least for the time being until the dust of the turmoil settled.[5]

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1. K. Krishna Murthy, *Buddhism in Tibet*. New Delhi 1989: 4-6
2. Ibid. p. 5
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. K. Krishna Murthy, *op. cit.*, p. 19; P. V. Bapat: *2500 Years of Buddhism*. New Delhi 1987: 67

Śāntarakśita went to Nepal and advised the king to invite the great Tantrik Master Padmasambhava of the University of Nālandā to cope with the crisis and reinforce the Dhamma.[6] Padmasambhava's magic was a great success in Tibet. He subdued Bon and its followers with his super-human Tantrik power. Later Śāntarakśita returned to Tibet and joined Padmasambhava in the propagation of the Dharma. Buddhism thus gained a firm footing in Tibet. Samye, the first monastery of Tibet, was established. The foundation of the Nyingma Order was laid down with the ordination of 3000 monks at a great convocation in 785 CE. A controversy arose between two groups—*Tsen min pa* and *Ton mun pa* -representing respectively Indian teachers and Chinese teachers and their adherents in Tibet over some theoretical and practical teachings of the Buddha relating to the method (sudden or gradual) of attaining the Buddhahood.[7] It necessitated the king to invite an erudite Indian Ācārya Kamalaśila, Śāntarakśita's disciple, to a historic debate on the Dharma with his Chinese counterpart Hwa-Shang. The debate known as the Great Samye Debate in the Tibetan history and held at Samye Temple in 792 CE concluded with the triumph of the Indian ācārya. After this debate Buddhism was declared as the state-religion of Tibet. Kamalaśila was appointed as the Head of the Sangha and Hwa-Shang was deported to China and his works were confiscated and banned in Tibet.[8] Later, four Chinese sent by Hwa-Shang murdered Kamalaśila.[9] Despite all this development, it would, however, still be naïve to construe that Bon was, as Alaka Chattopadhyaya writes, a 'dead and forgotten creed'.[10] It proved to be true; Bon teachers revived their heretical practices and enriched their 'scriptures' during the reign of King Lang Dar ma.[11] After the assassination of Ral pa can (815-841 CE), the successor of Khri srong lde btsan, Lang Dar ma ushered the throne of Tibet with the help of Tibetan aristocracy mostly consisting of followers of Bon.[12] 'The aristocracy, as Alaka Chattopadhyaya observes, would have not chosen him (Lang Dar ma) for the throne if he were himself in favor of the Buddhists…The circumstances that made him the king also demanded of him measures directly opposed to those that were adopted by Khri srong lde btsan. Acting in the interest of monarchy, Khri srong lde btsan found it necessary to suppress the Bon religion, while, being but a tool of aristocracy Lang Dar ma found it equally necessary to suppress Buddhism and reinstate Bon, the ideological weapon

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6. K. Krishna Murthy, *op. cit.*, p. 19
7. Bu-ston, *A History of Buddhism Part II*, tr. E. Obermiller, New Delhi 1986: 192-1995
8. K. Krishna Murthy, *op. cit.*, p. 45
9. K. Krishna Murthy, *op. cit.*, p. 20; Bu-ston, *op. cit.*, p. 196
10. Alaka Chattopadhyaya, *Atisa and Tibet*. Kolkata 1967: 165
11. K. Krishna Murthy, *op. cit.*, pp. 6-7
12. Alaka Chattopadhyaya, *op. cit*, p. 269

of Tibetan aristocracy'.[13] Lang Dar ma ruthlessly persecuted the Dharma and forced many monks into adopting the profession of hunters.[14] Consequently the Dharma that reached its zenith with the works of Indian and Tibetan ācāryas lost its grandeur. After six years of his ascension to the throne Lang Dar ma was assassinated by a monk, dPal gyi r do rje in 846 CE.[15]

Later on the cause of Buddhism was taken up by Khore Lha La ma Ye shes 'Od. Efforts were made to revive the Dharma. The king built Anupama Nirābhoga Vihāra ('the incomparable miraculous monastery') at Shang shung and sent twenty-one young men to India for the study of the Dharma.[16] However, 'their efforts', as Alaka Chattopadhyaya continues, 'were nebulous, sporadic and often misguided'.[17] In the name of so-called tantra various corrupt practices penetrated into Tibetan Buddhism leaving no one who could grasp the authentic Doctrine of the Master.[18] Alarmed with these practices Yeshes 'Od took sweeping measures for restoration and preservation of the true Dharma, and for this purpose he sent his nephew Byang chub 'Od and others to India to study the Dharma in general and tantra in particular and to invite the renowned Indian ācārya of the time Dīpankara Srijnāna popularly known as Atīśa (982-1054 CE) to Tibet.[19] Atīśa came to Tibet in 1040 CE through Nepal and stayed there for 17 years devoting himself totally to the cause of the Dharma.[20] He composed the Bodhipathapradīpa ('Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment') during the interval of his three-year stay (1042-1045 CE) at the Anupama Nirābhoga Vihāra at Tholing in *mNa ris* of West Tibet.[21]

REASONS FOR THE COMPOSITION OF BODHIPATHAPRADĪPA

Atīśa composed the Bodhipathapradīpa specifically in response to certain epigrams put forth by his disciple Lha Lama Byang chub 'Od.[22] Different texts regarding the number and

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13. Ibid., p. 269f
14. Alaka Chattopadhyaya, *op. cit,* p. 271; Bu-ston, *op. cit.*, p. 198
15. Alaka Chattopadhyaya, *op. cit,* p. 271; Bu-ston, *op. cit.*, p. 199; Lobsang Norbu Shastri, *Bodhipathapradipa of Acarya Dipankar Srijnana,* Saranath 1994: Intro p. ii
16. Alaka Chattopadhyaya, *op. cit,* p. 287
17. Ibid. p 279
18. Lobsang Norbu Shastri, *op. cit.*, Intro p. ii
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid.
21. Ramprasad Mishra, *Bodhipathapradīpa* of Dīpankara Srijnāna. Delhi 1998: 154
22. Ibid. *Bodhipathapradīpa* of Dīpankara Srijnāna. Delhi 1998: 154

content of the epigrams exist. The Panjikā of Atīśa mentions seven epigrams, but it does not elucidate them. Atiśāntusta-pujamegha, a commentary on the Bodhipathapradīp*a* by Konchok Gyaltsen, mentions the seven epigrams, two of which are general questions on the Pāramitās and Tantrayāna, two are related to the Pāramitāyāna and three to the Mantrayāna.[23] A commentary on the text by a Kadampa teacher, Śila Simha, gives only six epigrams, while the tradition of Khuton and Nyog Legs pa'i refers to only five epigrams. In his Panjikā Atīśa writes:[24]

'Jangchub Od always
Asked me seven epigrams
Those meanings are not vivid in their roots.
As requested, I will narrate them'.

The seven epigrams mentioned in the Atiśāntusta-pujamegha are arranged below 'in accordance', as Norbu Shastri writes, 'with their roots and commentarial enumerations':[25]

1. How should a Mahāyāna being be known?
   Purusastrividhā jňeyā to sadupāyan pravaksyāmi//
2. Can the Bodhi-mind be developed on the basis of the predictions of the ordinary being?
   Janmāntare'pi to śiksāyathoktā paripālanīyā//
3. Is it necessary that the Pratimokṣā vow should have its base in the Bodhi vow?
   Saptasu pratimoksesu to samvaranam na canyatha//
4. Can the Pratimokṣā vow, accompanied by the vow of the Mantrayāna, serve for both or does it undergo a transformation?
   Saptasu prātimoksesu sribhiksu samvara isyate//
5. Is the union of wisdom and means necessary for the completion of the two — accumulation of merit and wisdom?
   Prajnaparamitanam muktva to na nairatamyaik bhavanat//
6. For the perfect attainment, which of the two, the Mādhyamika or Cittamatrata, is to be accepted?
   Sunyatasaptai nyaya to sunyatayam prakitirtita//

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23. Ibid. Intro p. vi
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid. Intro p. vif

7. How should the adherent of the Mahāyāna proceed upon entering the portals of the Mantrayāna?
Mantranamsaktibhih siddhih to sidhirnaiva kadacana//

A question arises: why did Byang chub 'Od entreat Atīśa to compose this treatise? The answer to this question lies in the fact that Buddhism in Tibet lost its tune following its persecution by Lang Dar ma and the emergence of different doctrines and practices such as mahāsukha and five mākaras [madya (wine), mamsa (meat), matsya (fish), mudrā (woman), maithuna (sexual intercourse)] in the name of so-called tantra which are often defiled, misguided and removed from the original teachings of the Master. This condition demanded something special that could remove all the defilements from Tibetan Buddhism of the time, and light the torch of true Dharma. So generally the treatise tries to light a lamp in the darkness, to settle disagreements among Tibetan scholars on certain points of the Dharma in general and tantra in particular and to show the right path to Enlightenment.

SUBJECT-MATTER OF *BODHIPATHAPRADĪPA*

The Bodhipathapradīpa is not a philosophical work. It is rather, as a scholar writes, an "assimilative amalgam of the doctrines - Mādhyamika, Yogācara, Mahāyāna Sūtras and tantras of Buddhism..."[26] It is an assertion of the philosophy already expounded and established. It is a means to philosophy and a work precisely delineating the road to Enlightenment and Buddhahood. So Atīśa said,

"...*siddha siddhāntamātra hi bhāvanārthamudīritam*" [verse no. 52]. That is, the philosophical doctrines have already been expounded and established by siddhas (indicating Nāgārjuna, Vasubandhu and others); here he only explains them for use in meditation.

Atīśa's path to Enlightenment begins with an invocation to Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī, all the jīnas of three-time dimensions, Dharma and Sangha.

He describes three categories of person — the lesser (adhama), mediocre (mādhyama), and excellent (uttama). An excellent person is one wishing to attain Buddhahood and eliminate completely all the suffering of others. He has no desire to attain liberation quickly for himself; instead he lives for infinite lives for the sake of liberation of all sentient beings.

He refers to seven categories of worship prescribed in Samantabhadracārya needed for rising the bodhicitta and stresses upon the contemplation of suffering and the cultivation of love and compassion for all sentient beings.

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26. Ramprasad Mishra, *op. cit.*, p. 109

He refers to the virtues of bodhicitta mentioned in the Gandavyuha Sūtra of Maitreya.

The Bodhisattva vow is to be taken from a perfect teacher (sat guru), one who is skilled in the rituals of vow and who lives up the vow and who has knowledge and compassion to give the vow.

If no perfect teacher is found, a perfect ritual explained in the *Ornament Sūtra* should be followed in the way Mañjuśrī did to become King Ambara.

One should live up to moral code of conduct (sīla) and purification of karma done by body, mind and speech. Full ordination vow is the best among the asceticism.

One should accumulate merits and wisdom and acquire clairvoyance—an effective instrument to work for the benefit and liberation of all sentient being.

As regards wisdom and means, except prajňā pāramitā, all other pāramitās are means. The practice of the means and perfection of wisdom leads to Enlightenment. Wisdom helps adherents to understand the essence-less-ness and emptiness of all things. Wisdom transcends the dichotomy of conception and non-conception. The Meditation on non-conception refers to the Sūnyatāsaptati and the Mulamādhyamika-kārikā.

He recognizes the importance and power of tantra in aching Enlightenment in a simple way, emphasizes on the eight perfections of tantra and prescribes tantrik texts like the Kriyā cārya and Guhya. (61). However, it strictly forbids the Ādibuddhamahātantra for monks.

THE IMPORTANCE OF *BODHIPATHAPRADĪPA*

1. It communicates the essence of the very word of the Buddha. It clarifies the obscure doctrines.
2. It demonstrates errors or contrary views.
3. It is very handy for practice by persons of any level.
4. If one understands the text, and practices according to its advice, one never falls into misconceptions.
5. Grounded on Mahāyāna ideals the text synchronizes the philosophies of Mādhymika, Yogācara and Tantrik Buddhism and emphasizes on meditation for Enlightenment.
6. The text transformed the entire religious milieu of Tibet.

ANDREA LOSERIES

The Alchemy of Vision in Tibetan Tantrik Practice

According to Tibetan tradition the Buddha taught 84.000 different Dharmas as antidote to the 84.000 different conflicting emotions (kleśa) the sentient beings are suffering from. As an antidote to hatred (dveṣa) there are 21.000 different Sūtra teachings. Against desire (rāsa) there are 21.000 different Vinaya instructions and for overcoming delusion (moha) the Buddha taught 21.000 kinds of Abhidharma. The fourth Piṭaka as an antidote for all three basic mind poisons contains 21.000 teachings of the Guhyamantra or Vajrayāna.

Another classification lists the Sūtramarga or Laksaṇamarga and the Tantramarga.

Based on monastic ordination and commitment the main practice of the Sūtrayāna is Śamathā. When brought to completion, one understands the nature of mind.

The practice in Tantramarga or Vajrayāna focuses on the stages of creation (utpannakrama, *skyed rim)* and dissolution (sampannakrama, *rdzogs rim)* for unfolding full enlightenment. During the stage of creation the practitioner emerges in visualization of his enlightened nature in the form of deities in their Mandalas that are essentially clear light without any objective reality. This process, which is a general characteristic of any Tantrik practice, involves transformation of impure into pure vision *(dag snang)*. Leaving aside normal appearances one generates the inherent purity of one's own being, ripened (*smin)* during the empowerment (abhiṣeka) the Guru transfers on the disciple. The alchemy of vision during the meditative creation and dissolution is based on merging skillfully the philosophical views of Yogācara and Mādhyamika without getting lost in inner dialectics or inferential cognition.

Essential in this process is a solid foundation of perfect insight (prajňāpāramitā) into the nature of inner and outer phenomena, devoid of an own being (*rang bzhin med pa)*) or an unchangeable, eternal cause. Taking mind as such (*sems nyid*) as essentially void *(ngo bo stong pa)* with the nature of clarity *(rang bzhing gsal ba)* and all-pervading energy *(thugs rjes kun khyab)* similar to the sky or the mirror in which the world and its beings appear like a mirage, a reflection, the initiated Tantrik practitioner with the blessing wave *(byin rlabs)* of the Guru *(bLa ma)* undergoes in the stage of creation an alchemic rebirth starting with the beginning less or primordial state of void (*stong pa nyid*). Out of this limitless space of awareness emerges spontaneously the luminous seed of enlightenment in the form a syllable of the deity related to the respective Tantra cycle applied in meditative practice (Sādhana). In extended text versions for which usage an oral transmission (*lung)* is required, or in the

liberating (*sgrol*) individual key-instructions *(khrid)* given by the Vajra master (*rDo rje slob dpon)* it might be further elaborated that this seed syllable is placed on a lotus, the symbol of immaculate purity, and in between or on top of a sun and a moon disc, symbols for the female (sun) and male (moon) seeds merging at the time of physical conception. The recognition of this creative process out of the void is the awareness the practitioner identifies with by intoning the Mantra *OM SVĀBHAVA ŚUDDHA SARVA DHARMĀ$ SVĀBHAVA ŚUDDHO ATMAKO HAM* (*essentially pure and pure in nature are all phenomena and the notion of I)* before starting the visualization of deities and the Mandala.[1] This purity unfolds as luminosity with rays of light spreading in all ten directions, vibrating energy and sound filling the entire space. Just as a mirror projects whatsoever form appearing on its glimmering surface the rays of light return from the endless space endowed with the 'blessings of the Buddhas of all ten directions' and dissolving again into the seed syllable which consequently transforms into the 'embryonic' state of enlightened appearance in the form of a luminous blue Vajra, a lotus, a whecl or other symbol corresponding to the respective Buddha family (kula, *rigs*) and Tantrik cycle. The process of creation continues by emanating further vibrating light from the symbolic form inclosing the seed syllable at the center, invoking and giving birth to the full-developed appearance of the deity the Sādhaka identifies with in the center of a three dimensional Mandala created out of the light essences of the four elements.

This gradual stage of creation uses the method of conceptualization *(dmigs pa)* or mental perception, usually referred to as visualization. It is not a vision of clear light effortlessly revealing itself to the practitioner in a state of open awareness. It is a reality created by the power of thought and imagination strictly following the steps described in the texts. They give great details in regard to bodily characteristics such as color, number of heads, arms and legs, expression, posture, hand movements, attire, ornaments and implements displayed, explaining shape, function and their profound symbolism. Moreover, in the course of Abhişeka the master had introduced the disciple into the sacred history *(lo rgyud)* of the specific Tantrik transmission, which significance gradually will dawn on him when practicing the stage of creation. These manuals have been the basis for collections of deity descriptions such as the Sādhanamālā[2], one of the most important reference books for Tibetan art and iconography as its describes and illustrates the entire pantheon of Tibeto-Mongolian Tantrik Buddhism.

According to the 'new Tantras' introduced in Tibet during the second spread of Buddhism *(phyi dar)* which took place between the end of the tenth and the 12th century C.E., the Tantras

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1. F. example in: *rJe dus gsum mkhyen pa'I thugs dam lnga tshan nga las mde mchod lha nga ba'i mdon par rtogs pa rje karma pa brgyad pas mdzad pa*, section 9, Tibetan block print, Tsurphu.
2. See Mallmann, Marie-Therese de: Introduction dans l"iconography du Tantrism Bouddhique. Paris 1975; .Bhattacharyya, Benoytosh: The Indian Buddhist Iconography. Sadhanamala. New Delhi 1993

are divided into four different classes and used and practiced according to the individual capacity of the disciple. This classification corresponds with the four dominant philosophical schools, namely Sarvāstivādin, Sautrāntika, Yogācara and Mādhyamaka prevalent in that period in India. It also bears an analogy with the four castes (jāti) of Indian society.

The first category is the class of Kriyātantra *(bya ba'i rgyud)* where the approach and relationship of practitioner and tutelary deity (iṣṭadevatā, *yid dam*, 'bound to mind') is compared to the first gazing and smiling at each other like lovers. It is a relationship of awe and respect, involving mental purification for being in the presence of the deity, analog to the Sarvāstivādin concept of reality and corresponding to the Brahmin caste. The deities visualized in Kriyātantra are always of benevolent, peaceful aspect (Four armed Avalokiteśvara, Green Tārā, Buddha Amitābha etc.)

In Cāryatantra *(spyod pa'i rgyud)* the relationship between Sādhaka and *yid dam* is compared to holding hands and exchanging words and gifts between lovers, it involves elaborate ritual offerings and libations and the deities are also of peaceful type (Kşatriya).

The third category is Yogatantra or Uttarayogatantra *(rnal byor gyud)*. Here the rapport is compared with the act of touching and kissing between lovers. This level emphasizes the dissolution stage aspect with the initial steps of Prāṇāyāma and Yantrayoga *('khrul 'khor rnal byor)* or the inner yoga practice. The deities could be semi-ferocious such as Vajrayoginī and Vajravārahī. The view here corresponds to the Mind Only School of Yogācara and there is given an analogy with the Indian Vaiśya cast.

The fourth and highest Tantra class, Anuttaratantra or Anuttarayogatantra *(bla med gyud)* finally involves sexual union and therefore most deities of this Tantra class are represented in embrace with their consort *(Yab yum)* and of wrathful appearance. The view corresponds to the Śūnyatāvadin school of Mādhyamaka. The analogy is given with the Śudra cast of Indian society, as at this stage all inhibitions and differentiation have been transcended into the experience of the Great bliss void (Mahāsukha) based on the practice and realization of Candalā *(gTum mo)* i.e. uniting the vital wind (Prāṇā, *rlung)* in the central channel. This category is further divided into Mother-, Father and neutral Tantra *(ma- pa- gnyis med kyi rgyud)*, relevant in regard to emphasizing one of the three aspects of realization experience *(nyams rtogs)* either going on the side of bliss (Mother Tantras), or clarity (Father Tantras) or the void (neutral).

Generally the Tantrik practice is related to the physical body and its energy. While Sūtra practice focuses more on the manipulation of cognitive mind, Tantrik practice emphasizes the manipulation of energy through sound and the control of vital wind (prāṇā, *rlung)* and seeds (bindu, *thig le)* in the psychic channels (nādīs, *rtsa)*.

In the 'Song of realizing the five-fold Mahāmudrā' written by the Drikung Master Jigten Sumgon[3], it is said:

Your own body is divine form, a king.
If you do not hold the throne as the unchangeable base
Mother Dākinīs will not be subjects assembling at your court.
Therefore pay heed that your body as the Yidam deity.

With these verses the master reminds the practitioner to give rise to 'divine pride' *(lha'i nga rgyal)*, fearless and mighty like a king. It is the self-affirmation, the pride (abhimāna) of identifying with a supramundane divinity. No ordinary person is fit to approach or identify with the sacred, unless a 'merging' or 'entry' (*zug jug, 'jug pa)* of the consecrated person (*dam tshig pa)* with the noumenon wisdom aspect *(ye shes pa)* takes place. The Mātṛikas and Ḍākiṇīs mentioned in the context are also understood to be of the same supramundane level

This process of generating oneself as the deity in the center of a sacred Mandala is not just a holographic visualization, but also an authentic experience of being it, of feeling it energetically, identifying with all elements and aspects. When focusing f.i. on the lions which support the divine throne, they are not material decorations, but wild and alive, 'that make me want to roar', as the XVII Karmapa Urgen Thinle Dorje formulated it with heart opening authenticity.[4]

It is more than just inhabiting the deity, using the appearance and implements like a suitable armor or space suit for safely penetrating into the pure dimension of the Mandala areas where otherwise our normal embodiment and identities would be destroyed, as recently David B. Gray in his excellent study on the Cakrasamvara Tantra has explained it, by using the fitting metaphor of 'psychonaut', in parallel with 'astronauts'.[5]

The alchemy of pure vision in the generating and dissolution phases also does not necessarily follow the static model of the conceptual opposition pair 'mundane' (laukika) and 'transmundane' (lokattara) in analogy to the phases of generation (laukika) and dissolution (lokattara). It has

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3. *Phyag rgya chen po' i lnga ldan rtogs pa' i mgur* by *'Bri gung rJigs rten sum dgon : ranglus lha sku 'I rgyal po la / gzhi 'gyur med kyi gdan sa ma zin na / ma kha' 'gro'I 'khor 'bangs mi 'du bas / lus yi dam gyi lha la nan tan mdzod //* (Translation by author)
4. While giving Teachings of Cakrasamvara, Kagyu Monlam, Bodhgaya, December 2006
5. Gray, David B.: *The Cakraamvara Tantra (TheDiscourse of Sri Heruka)*. A Study and Annotated Translation, New York 2007: Preface X.

to be understood as a dynamic process of transformation, where the trans-valuation is related to the deployment of the four Tantra classes as described above.[6]

Pure vision *(dag snang)* refers to the transmundane awareness of an undefiled mind (apapacittā), not just as a process of internalization of the macrocosm in the microcosm of the Sādhaka's own body, energy and mind, but rather – as David S. Ruegg has pointed out – as 'procedures that might be thought of as forming part of the salvific mesocosm of ritual and practice.'[7]

Pure vision means that every form is seen as the deity, every sound perceived is the Mantra and every thought is wisdom. While the time of ritual practice is no more than an intermediate state (antarabhava, *bar do*) with a beginning and an end and therefore subject to impermanence divided into the two stages of generation and dissolution, the pure vision is to be maintained also in the post phase of practice *(rjes grub)*. This is the time of applying integral yoga (sahajayoga) and – to speak in Sūtra terms - training in the Path of Seeing *(mthong lam)* and the Path of Non-Learning *(mi sblobs)*.

Maintaining pure vision means to remain in the unaltered nature of one's own mind, naked, just as it is, as demonstrated by the famous Indian Mahāsiddhas at the turn of the first millennium.

The question arises whether the Tantrik traditions with their complex ritual systems and practices and magical transmissions dating back to medieval times have any salvific relevance in the second millennium of postmodern humanities and technologies.

On the outer or mundane level the Tantras, whether the Buddhist Vajrayāna or the Śaivaite and Śakti Purāṇas, have been subject to enculturation and assimilation into more moderate institutionalized, monastic movements in Tibet as well as in India. Yet, due to the highly esoteric character of the tradition the inner core of it is still accessible due to uninterrupted transmissions till today.

On the transmundane level or on the ground of internalization – a main characteristic of Tantrik practice – these traditions are more relevant than ever. Particularly now, a time, which marks the end of the teaching period of the fourth historical Buddha Sākyamuṇi usually calculated to last 2500 years, the Tantras are most effective.

The alchemy of Tantra works on the basis of strong passions. Where there is no wood, there is no fire. Although lust, greed and hatred have rather increased than diminished within

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6. On this discussion see the selective writings in Ruegg, David. S.: *Thee Symbiosis of Buddhism with Brahmanism/Hinduism in South Asia and of Buddhism with 'local cults' in Tibet and the Himalaya region*. Vienna 2008.

7. Ruegg 2008:124

the last thousand years, education, knowledge and some wisdom awareness have developed. Therefore – as written in prophesies – now it is the time when Tantrik alchemy for transforming passions into enlightened wisdom works best, better then other holistic models of salvation and promises of paradise thereafter.

The alchemy of pure vision is not so much a process of making up, improving, restoring, conserving a lost and endangered heritage of enlightened being from a dull, sullied state of confusion, but an unpretentious inter being, just that, unfolding a limitless potential on the ground of timelessness *(dus med)* – also called the fourth time *(dus bzhi pa)* in Tantrik literature – and limitless space, where the play (līlā) goes on.

MADHU KHANNA

The Journey to the Goddess Tārā Adoption and Adaptation of a Buddhist Goddess in Hindu Tantrik Worship

This paper attempts to trace the journey of Goddess Tārā through successive phases of her development and transmission in Mainland China, Tibet, and her subsequent absorption in Hindu Tantrik worship. The exploration of the multiple personification goes to show that the Hindu Tantrik Goddess Tārā was a hybrid reconstruction from Buddhist sources that gets adopted, and subsequently, legitimized in the Tantrik circle of ten Goddesses known as Daśa Mahāvidyās.

The mode of transmission of the Goddess Tārā, from Buddhist to Hindu Tantra is inevitably mediated in three ways: literary transmissions of Buddhist Tantrik texts into Hindu Tantras, iconographical transmissions, and transmissions that take place through narrative of Vasiṣṭha, associated with the Goddess Tārā. The Hindu Tantrik traditions of medieval India pose an enormous challenge to the scholars of religion. The sources available for documentation on the genesis, history of evolution and development of Tantrik traditions in medieval India do not lend themselves to a definitive history either of art or of Tantrik religion. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to recount a linear history of the Tantrik tradition marking its phases of evolution and decay only because the contours of such a history would shift and change in relation to the criteria one applies for a particular order of exposition. If one were to attempt a text-based history, one will face a mass of incoherent information teeming with intratextual influence from different regions of India. If one attempts an iconographic-based history, we may end up writing a disembodied history of images, all of which may not be supported by textual references. If the criteria are grounded on a historical material such as hagiographies of lineages we will learn about subjective reconstruction of a particular cult or its sub-cult. If dissent and heterodoxy are the criteria then the history of Tantra will centre on the interaction between cults and sub-cults. If one dares to combine all these approaches three will be several gaps and omissions that will still remain to be filled.

The second concern of the paper is to show that a worthy approach to the understanding of Śakta Tantra is to look at multiple modes of transmissions. Our aim in this paper is precisely to explore the multiple modes, and its influence in shaping a single iconic image at a certain moment of religious history when boundaries of Hindu and Buddhist culture were fluid. A holistic approach may lend itself to a more definitive history than the reductive approaches that centres on a singular model of speculation, stated earlier.

The Goddess Tārā (known variously as Ekajaṭā, Ugra-Tārā, Mahācīna-Tārā and Nīlā Sarasvatī) occupies a central place in Tibetan Buddhism and has played a major role as a national deity of Tibet. The earlier reference to the Buddhist Tārā is traceable to the seventh century in Subandhu's *Vasavadatta.* In Buddhist Tantra mythology Tārā's lineage is traced to the Dhyani Buddha Amoghasiddhi. She is also associated to the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara. Tārā's references are also found in Chinese sources. Tārā's essential character in Tibetan Buddhism is identified with her saviour role that rescues her devotees from peril. She is understood to embody to essence of compassion. The sage-philosopher Atīśa (eleventh century) is credited to have popularized the cult of Tārā in Tibet, through his translations of many Sanskrit texts into Tibetan.

It is widely accepted by scholars that Tārā's reception and absorption into Hinduism was greatly facilitated via Tibetan Buddhism. One of the most popular forms of Tārā is designated Mahācīna-Tārā, 'The Tārā of Great China' (also known as Ugra-Tārā, who has been referred both in the Buddhist, Chinese and the Hindu sources. Tārā made her official entry into Hinduism through Tibetan sources. What is significant in the Hindu Tantrik sources is her constant affiliation to *Cinācāra* the 'Chinese Way of worship traceable to the esoteric Tantrik path of *Kaula-marga'*. Although scholars recognized Tārā's links to China and Tibet, some critical reflection of Tārā's journey to India remains an unexplored question. The traditional Tantrik area extends from Vindhya Mountain to China *(Mahācina).* There are strong reasons to accept that this cult originally belongs to Mainland China and traveled to India via Bhoṭa/Tibet.

From the early Buddhist sources, namely the Guhyasamāja-Tantra, it can be safely addressed that the Buddhist Tārā is one of the major Mahāyāna Buddhist deities who was worshipped as early as fourth century CE. The literary evidence for the Hindu adaptation of Tārā is much later. The literatures representing the trade routes that may be associated with Tārā are not very ancient. Pre-eminently, a deity who is revered in eastern India, she is known from Tantrik texts, not earlier than the fourteenth century onwards, such as *Toḍala Tantra, Tārā Rahasya, Pheṭakaraṇī Tantra, Nīlāsarasvatī Tantra, Tārābhaktisudārṇava,* presumably when the movement for consolidating the numerous strands of Śakta Tantra against the rivaling influence of Brahmanical-Puranic cult took place.

It is understood[1] that up to the seventeenth century CE the cult of Tārā had an independent existence. But there came a moment in history during the course of its development that the cult of Tārā merged with the prevalent cult of Goddess Kālī in Eastern Bengal, who had acquired another unique identity as the principal deity of the cult of Goddesses known as the Mahāvidyās. The circle comprised ten major streams of Śakta worship of Goddesses: Kālī,

1. B.K. Bhattacharyya, *Tārā in Hinduism,* 200, p. IX

Tārā, Soḍaśī, Bhuvaneśvarī, Chinnamastā, Bagālāmukhī, Dhūmavatī, Tripurabhairavī, Mātaṅgī and Kamalā. These Goddesses merged and consolidated into the newly formed tradition of the Daśa Mahāvidyās. In this circle the Goddess Tārā is the second Mahāvidyā after Kālī.

Prior to her Hindu affiliation, as a major deity in the Mahāyāna pantheon, she commanded special worship in the northern Himalayan belt in countries such as Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim, Tibet, China, Mongolia up to Indo-China. The pan-Himalayan indigenous religions also played a major role in the formation of the Hindu and Buddhist cultures. The pan-Himalayan people represented a culture, which was considered heretical, primal, or even ominous and barbaric to the people of the main-land.

The second Mahāvidyā, the Goddess Tārā's *dhyāna-mantra* is identical with that of Ekajaṭa-Tārā. We learn from the *Tārā Tantra,* the *Brahmayāmāla,* and the *Rudrayāmāla* that a community of practitioners of the Goddess was initiated into the cult of Ekajaṭa-Tārā worshipped by the Buddhist erotico-spiritual Kaula cult prevalent in Mahācina, a region beyond the celebrated peak of Mount Kailāsa and the Rāksasa Tala close to Mānasārovara in present Chinese Tibet. This new form of practice of Tārā was designated by the Hindu practitioners as *Cinācāra,* or *Mahācīnācāra.* As this esoteric form of practice was located in, or came from China, the Goddess came to be addressed as *Mahācīnācāra.* This very specific form of erotico-spiritual Tantrik worship was adopted from China and Tibet. There is sufficient literary evidence to support the merging of the two traditions of Viṣṇu-Buddha, and the transformation of a Vedic sage Viśvāmitra (the preceptor of Daśaratha in the *Rāmāyaṇa),* to his elevation as a Tantrik *siddha,* who was led to acquire his Tantrik powers *(siddhis)* by means of the method of worship preached by Viṣṇu-Buddha in China. There are extensive descriptions of *Cinācāra,* an esoteric method of worship of the Goddess Tārā. The *Cinācāra* was introduced into the Hindu Tantrik fold in India by Buddhist *siddhas* who were, it seems, in close interaction with Hindu Śaiva-Śakta practitioners of *Kaula-mārga.* This ancient tradition of *Cinācāra* was gradually adopted, and then gradually adapted to the indigenous erotocentric Tantrik worship centered on the cult of Tārā in Bengal. This esoteric form of worship stood in contrast to the ideals of Vedic puritanism and asceticism.

TĀRĀ IN CHINA

The cult of Tārā also has its historical antecedents in China. According to scholar N.N. Bhattacharyya[2] her cult traveled to China and gets associated with Avalokiteśvara, whose

2. N.N. Bhattacharyya, ed., *The Cult of Tārā in Historical Perspective in Tantra Buddhism,* 1999, pp. 190-204.

whole persona underwent a transformation from a male deity to a Goddess. This transformation took place under the influence of the pre-Buddhist (Taoist and Confucius tradition) of the Mother Goddess Si-Wang-Mu, who symbolically represented the Feminine Principle of Yin. It is acknowledged that the Goddess Tārā merged with her male consort Avalokiteśvara who assumed the form of the Goddess Kuan-yin in China. This encounter influenced the Tārā cult as it now came under the shadow of the existing belief systems, especially those of Taoism and its exalted concept of Yinism, which gives a prominent place to the female principle. These exerted a counter influence on Buddhist and non-Buddhist Hindu Tantra.

Thus, in the Mahāyāna Buddhist tradition Goddess Tārā is conceptualized as the primal female energy of Avalokiteśvara, who is invested with powers to avert evil, save one from dangers and to drive away all calamities. She is a Goddess who removes eight great dangers *(mahābhaya)*. From seventh century onwards, the influence of Buddhist Tantra came to be felt in India and it is well acknowledged that the Śakta tradition in Bengal received a great momentum from the Buddhist cult of Tara. The Śākta Tārā known as Ekajaṭā, Nīkasarasvatī and Ugra-Tārā is an adaptation of the Mahāyāna Buddhist deity.

Tārā makes an official debut when the Yogācāra system, taught by philosopher Asaṇga, takes root in the fourth century, a period when the feminine principle begins to be venerated in Buddhism. A well-known legend holds that Tara came into being from a beam of blue light emanating from one of the eyes of Avalokiteśvara. Another form of her was born from a lotus floating in a tear on his face. Women, in this tradition were the human incarnation of Tārā. The two wives of King Srong-btsan Sgam-po, Wengchen, who were a Chinese and a Nepalese, came to be known as human incarnations of the Goddess.[3] To distinguish between the two wives, the Tibetans were led to create two aspects of Tārā. White Tārā for Chinese had a full-blown lotus as her symbol. The green Tārā, for the Nepalese, she had for her emblem, a half blown blue lotus. The two Tārās emanated in twenty-one forms. Mercy and compassion are seen primarily as feminine virtues in the Chinese context and Tārā emerged as a supreme saviouress, a symbol of compassion and mercy. Adored as a compassionate mother of peoples of Tibet and Nepal, her enduring impact traveled to China in a different form. Chinese Buddhism evolved a feminine *bodhisattva,* or Buddha-to-be, designated Kuan Yin, who far outstripped male *bodhisattvas* in popularity. In pre-revolutionary China, she assumed a high status and became a powerful figure. It is said that just as Buddhism is the greatest gift of India to world religions, the transfiguration of Avalokiteśvara in the form of the Goddess Guanyin—as Goddess of Mercy is the greatest contribution of China to the Buddhist world. The popularity is due to the perfect representation of Avalokiteśvara — Guanyin as compassion *(karuṇā)* and wisdom

3. Bhagyalakshmi, *The Creation of Goddess of Mercy from Avalokiteśvara,* pp. 2ff

(prajñā) in a single image. Avalokiteśvara, a male god in India transformed into a Chinese Goddess in an overtly male dominated patriarchial society. The accommodation of the two-in-one synergy took place gradually. The female anatomy was absent. Religious faith, efficacy, dreams, visions; crosscurrents of the folk, tribal, and royal patronage in different regions were at the basis of this transformation. It is quite obvious that Guanyin was visualized as having all the aspects of Tārā in her persona. Tārā images mediated to create an all-inclusive Guanyin.

On the authority of *Sammohana Tantra*[4] Tārā is the form of Ugra-Tārā and Nīlasarasvatī originated from a lake called Cola on the western side of China *(Cīnadeśa)*. Bagchi suggested that *kul* or *col*, is found with the names of many lakes to the west and north of Tien-shan, or the pure Mongolian zone. The same work names many centres of Tantrik culture such as Bāhlika (Balkh), Kirāta (hill tribes in Himalayan zone), Bhoṭa (Tibet), Pārśvakika (Persia), Airika (Iraq), Kāmboja, Huṇa, Yavana, Gandhāra and Nepal. In this list, Cīna (China), and Mahācīna (Greater China), stand out prominently.

The *Sammohana Tantra* also enumerates that a hundred primary and seven subsidiary Tantras were found in China *(ṣaṭan tantrāṇi cīna tu upatantrāṇi sapta ca,* Bagchi, pp. 47-49). The eastern Śakta Pīṭhas — Kāmagiri, Pūrṇagiri, Oddiyāna and Jalandhara, were situated on the high roads leading to countries in the northern part of India in and around the Himalayas. While the early history of mystic beliefs held by lineage-based communities is hard to reconstruct, it is plausible that there was a close interaction between local groups that traveled through established Silk Routes and spread the *Cīnācāra* form of worship to India.[5]

TRANSMISSION AND MODES OF ADAPTATION

In the following part of this paper I propose to trace the process that was adopted to Hinduize Goddess Tārā. The transmission from Buddhist to the Hindu Tārā can be identified clearly in three areas, namely (1) Textual or literary transmissions that took place from Buddhist to Hindu sources; (2) iconographical transmissions; and (3) transmissions that took place through the narrative mode and patterns of worship.

Gudrun Bühnemann[6] has produced very convincing evidence on the literary transmission that took place from the Buddhist text Sarvatavajra's *Mahācīna-krama-Sādhana* to the *Śakta Pheṭakaranī Tantra* (Chapter 11). The latter text quotes almost verbatim from the former.

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4. P.C. Bagchi, *Studies in the Tantras,* pp. 42-43
5. Ibid., pp. 43-4
6. Gudrun Bühnemann, "The Goddess Mahācīnā Krama-Tārā (Ugra-Tārā) in Buddhist and Hindu Tantrism", in *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies,* vol. 59, nos. 1-3, 1998, pp. 472-93, cf N.N. Bhattacharyya, *The Cult of Tārā,* p. 199

The importation from the Buddhist into a Hindu Tantra goes to show a remarkable syncretism between the two cultures. It is further established by Bühnemann that the description of Tārā given in the *Phetakaranī Tantra* are echoed in several authoritative sources such as *Tantrasara, Bṛhannila Tantra, Tārābhaktisudharnava* and Brahmānanda's *Tārā Rahasya.* These sources show how the *Tārā sādhanās* were carried over in the Hindu Tantras. In the aforesaid texts several adaptations with minor variants appeared in the Hindu Texts.

Another marker of the cross-fertilization of the two traditions is mirrored in the iconography of Goddess Tārā — The Buddhist Mahācīna-krama-Tārā (identical with Ekajaṭā) has Akṣobhya, one of the five *Tathāgatas (*Amitābha, Akṣobhya, Vairocana, Amogasiddhi and Ratnasambhava) on the crown of her head.

The image of the Hindu Mahāvidyā Tārā is also adorned with Akṣobhya who is perched on a tawny coloured topknot of her hair. In her four hands *Tārā* holds a sword and a pair of scissors, a blue lotus and a skull cup. She is dark *(nīla),* stout with a protruding belly and is adorned with snake ornaments and wears a bone ornament[7] as a diadem on her head. In the Hindu version of the icon, Akṣobhya appears in the form of a snake, sometimes a three-headed snake; or Akṣobhya is seated on a snake.[8] The Hindu adaptation becomes more pronounced in the *Todala Tantra* (15-6) which gives an explanation that Akṣobhya adorning *Tārā*'s head is in actual fact none other than Śiva himself, who acquired the epithet of the unshakable one (= Akṣobhya) when he drank the *halahala* (poison) at the time of the churning of the ocean, without any agitation or discomfort *(a-ksobha).*[9] The Hinduized Akṣobhya, inspired from the Buddhist version gets transformed in the emblem of the serpent. However, the Buddhist Akṣobhya continues to dominate in the ritual where the name Akṣobhya appears as a *ṛṣi* of the *mantra,* the first sage who saw the *mantra* in divine vision. The several hymns describing her mental image refer to her as Prajñāpāramitā.[10]

TRANSMISSIONS THROUGH NARRATIVE: THE VASIṢṬHA LEGEND AND THE NATURE OF CĪNĀCĀRA 'THE CHINESE METHOD OF WORSHIP'

Tārā Cīnācāra is established in the celebrated Vasiṣṭha legend, which is mentioned in almost all the authoritative Śakta sources on the worship of *Tārā*. The earliest reference to Cīnācāra

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7. The five bone ornaments technically called *pañca-mudrā* are understood as *pañcakāpāla,* or five skull ornaments. Bühnemann, *op. cit.*, p. 476
8. *Tārā Tantra* in *Śaktapramoda,* p. 114 cf. *Mantramahodadhi* cited by Bühnemann, *op. cit.*, p. 473, *The Śrī Tārā Svarūpa-tattva,* Samvat 2013, pp. 20-21 (states: *akṣobhyānaga sambodha-jaṭājuṭam)*
9. *Todala Tantra,* Chapter. I, *Tārā Tantra,* the note quotes *Todala Tantra,* Chapter. II, p. 10
10. *Tārā Tantra,* Introduction, *op. cit.*, p. 19

is found in *Phetakaranī Tantra* dated to fourteenth or fifteenth century of the Christian era. The Cīnācāra is described through the legend, in several versions, is recounted in the *Mahācīnācāra Tantra, Rudrayāmāla, Brahmayāmāla, Tārā Tantra,* and the *Tārā Rahasyā.* The words *Cīnā, Mahācīnā* and *Cīnācāra* are mentioned as many as over twenty times. The consistent reference to *Cīnā* and *Mahācīnā* in the sources of the worship of *Tārā* shows the importance of the connection between China, or even if it were an imaginary land designated as *Cīnā.* The Hindu Tantras als constantly hark back to an earlier source beyond the borders of India to legitimize the un-Vedic radical style of worship expounded in the so-called Chinese method of the worship of Tara. We have to, on the evidence of these literary sources, believe that there must have been some form of *Cina* Tantra existing beyond the borders of India whether in Tibet or in mainland China that slowly began to make its presence felt in the medieval period and got absorbed by means of the legend into the Hindu Tantrik sources.

The Vasiṣṭha legend is recounted in several Tantras[11] and describes in all its versions at length the conversion of the erstwhile Vedic sage, Vasiṣṭha who was a staunch *smārta,* a *Brahmaputra,* into a Tantrik *siddha.* One version of the legend from *Tārā Tantra,* runs thus. Parvatī is anxious to know about the efficacious *mantra* by which Buddha and Vasiṣṭha attained the status of Bhairavahood. Śiva then says that the highest plane of spiritual awareness was attained by means of adopting the non-Brahmanical code of conduct followed by the left-wing *(vāmācara)* sect of Tantrism. And Buddha who is simply another form of Lord Viṣṇu was initiated in the *mantra* of Ugra-Tārā whereby he attained the status of an immortal creator. The subversion of Buddha into Viṣṇu shows the adaptation of a Buddhist Tantrik worship into the fold of Śakta Tantra. The *Tārā Tantra* refers to *Cina Tantra,* alluding the fact that Vasiṣṭha could not find Buddha either in India or in Tibet and had to go to China to learn the *Mahācīnā-krama,* the Chinese method of worship, which in this case is the *vāma-kaula-krama,* or the path professed by the left-wing school of Tantra designated as being outside the domain of Vedas and Brāhmanical orthodoxy *(vedabāhya).* But, it is important to note that the adaptation of the Buddhist Tara must have occurred when Buddhism was lost in India, somewhere between the early centuries of the Mughal rule probably before sixteenth century when Brāhmānanda authored authentic works such as the *Tārā Rahasya.*

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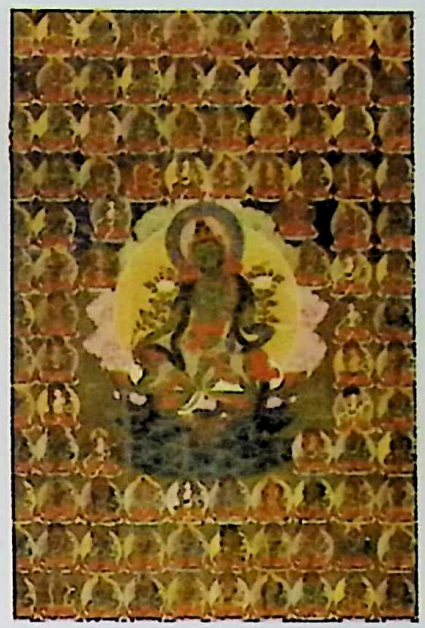
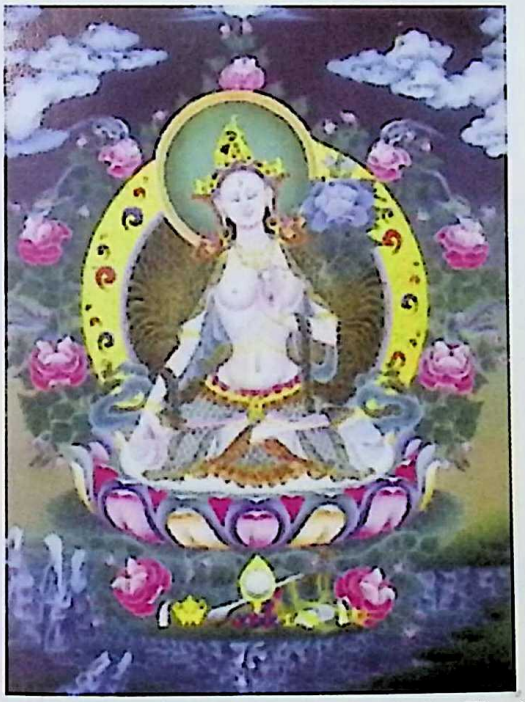
11. *Tārā Tantra,* ed. A.K. Mitra, 1983, pp. 22-31; cf. *Brahmayāmāla,* pp. 26-33 *Rudrayāmāla,* pp. 22-26, p. 152 cited in *Tārā Tantra;* cf. H.P. Sastri, *Notices of the Sanskrit MSS,* Second Series, vol. I, introduction, XXXII and XXXIII, p. 152; *Mahācīnācāra-Sara-Tantra,* ed. Pandit Ramadutta Shukla, Prayag, Samvat 2043, Chapter I and II; *Nīlasarasvaīi Tantram* ed. S.N. Kahandelwal, New Delhi, Choukhamba Saurabh Granthmala, 245, 1994 Chapter 13

White Tārā, Tibet, 1600-1700s, gilt Bronze, The Berti Aschmann Foundation of Tibetan Art at the Museum Rietberg, Zurich



Green Tārā and her multiple forms Tibet, 1700s, Thanka Zimmermann Family collections



White Tārā, (Chinese Tuoluo), Style Thanka Nepal, 20th Century

Eleven headed Avalokiteśvara, Cave No. 76, Song dynasty, China

Hindu Tārā, Pahari style, 19th Century, Arpana Art Gallery Collection, New Delhi

Hindu Tārā, Pahari Style, 19th Century, Arpana Art Gallery Collection, New Delhi

Mahāvidyā Tārā by Poet-painter Molaram Garhwal, 1811 AD, Bharatiya Kala Bhawan, Varanasi, No. 113129

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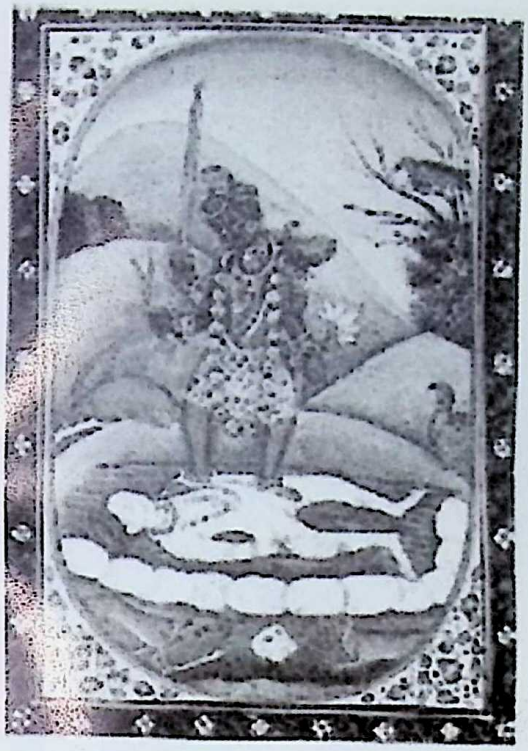

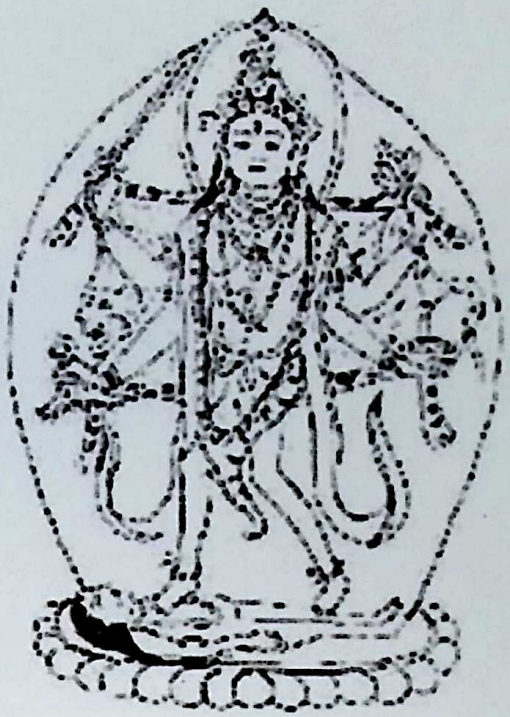

Hindu Tārā, Pahari a. 1800 and Buddhist Mahacīnācara Tārā (After NN Bhatacharyya, 1958) Pl. xxvi. (b)

Hindu Tārā, Rajasthan c. 18th century, Ajit Mookerjee Collection, National Museum, New Delhi

Tārā in Mahāvidyā circle (middle row extreme right), Rajasthan, 19th century, Private collection

We may now recount the legend to show how 'story making' in religious texts becomes a method of adoption and absorption of another faith, by means of reinventing, relocating, fusing mythological characteristics, to legitimize and to make potent one's own sectarian supremacy.

The narrative goes thus:[12] Vasiṣṭha practised fierce austerities in the name of Goddess Tārā for a thousand years but did not receive her favour. An angry and perturbed Vasiṣṭha abandoned the worship and goes to Brahmā. Brahmā lauds Tārā and says that 'Her *mantra (vidyā)* is full of knowledge as it saves people from the repeated round of births and deaths. It is by her favour that Brahmā creates the fourteen worlds, the four Vedas ..., Viṣṇu protects the world and Rudra destroys the whole cosmos (Chapter 1, 17-20).' Brahma instructs him to go to Nīlālacala 'The Blue Mountain' (modern Kāmākhyā, in Assam) and worship the Goddess with her *mantra* (Chapter 1, 32). Instructed by Brahmā, Vasiṣṭha performed his meditations for 10,000 years but failed again. Unhappy and frustrated Vasiṣṭha rises up to curse the Goddess. To his astonishment she appears before him and tells him that 'the method of her worship is known only to Viṣṇu (Janārdana) who resides in the form of Buddha in *Mahācīnā* 'Great China'. His efforts are never going to bear fruit without following the method of *Cīnācāra* (1.41, 45a) and that he has missed the essence of her worship *(tattvam* 1.45) as he has been following the Vedic methods opposed *(viruddhācāra,* 1.45a) to the *kaulācāra.* Upon being instructed by Brahmā, Vasiṣṭha goes to Great China, which is located by the side of the Himalayas *(himavata parśve* 2.26). There he beholds thousands of beautiful youthful women whose hearts are gladdened with wine *(madiramodacittena* 2.36), and who are immersed in blissful pleasures of the senses, raimented with garments that inspire erotic passion. Free of fear or prudish shame, (2.3-5), they surround Lord Buddha, whose eyes were drooped with wine *(madamanthara locanam* 2.56). Vasiṣṭha wondered what Viṣṇu was up to in his Buddha form following a method of worship that was opposed to the Vedas *(vedaviruddhācāra* 2.ka, p. 6). He then heard a celestial voice saying 'that this is the most excellent method and Tāriṇī, the Saviouress is not pleased with any other method. If you wish to win her grace then worship her by means of *Cīnācāra,* 'the Chinese method.' What this legend has us believe is that the great *mantra* of Tārā was not efficacious even in Kāmākhyā, Assam as her most efficacious worship was prevalent beyond India and that worship was unorthodox and, in one way, ran diametrically opposite to the mainstream (2.45 ff).

Buddha then tells him about the nature of *Cīnācāra (= kaulācāra)* worship of Tāriṇī, and her supreme Truth by the practice of which he will not sink into the cycle of birth and death as this esoteric knowledge gives immediate release (2.15-16). He explains that this path is free of ritual rules. In the *Cīnācāra* way, bathing, recitation of *mantra (japa),* ablutions and ceremonial worship are performed mentally (2.17). There is no special auspicious or inauspicious

12. *Mahācīnācāra-Sāra-Tantra,* Chapter I, *op. cit.*

hour for performance of worship *(sarva eva śubha kāla* 2.18), neither day, nor night, nor twilight nor midnight. All times are auspicious. There is no ritual defect *(śuddhi)* of impurity, or purity. There are no prohibitions against taking food. The Goddess can be worshipped without bodily purifications and even after partaking of food. In this worship wine and other substance are considered pure. There is no rule of conduct, or a non-rule. This is the spontaneous path *(svecchācāra* 2.32) in which women who are considered to be incarnations of Her image should be worshipped and never should any injury be done to them (2.4).

The legend represents the conflict between the Brāhmanical orthodoxy and the heterodox traditions, in this case the Tantrik Śāktas. The legend subverts the religious role a virtuous high-placed brāhmaṇa is supposed to play. The prehistory of Vasiṣṭha describes him as a celebrated sage, born of the Vedic gods Mitra and Varuṇa, who appears as a great teacher in the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa.* In Vedic tradition he stands for the perfect brāhmaṇa ideal. The Tantrik legend subverts Vasiṣṭha's Brāhmanical role. The key element implicit in the legend is the conflict between the orthodox Brāhmanical norm and the anti-Brāhmanical practice of *Cīnācāra.* This is a story of spontaneous conversion of a brāhmana sage who demonstrates the prowess of Tantrik *mantra* of the Goddess Tārā, and thereby validates the path of the Śākta's as one being superior to the Vedic.

Ritual also asserted an abiding influence on the worship of Hindu Tārā. There are several liturgical elements that were adopted from Buddhist sources in the making of Tārā. In the daily worship *(nitya-pūjā)* of Tārā, the usage of the word *vajra-udaka, vajraniṣibharam,*[13] the worship of *bodhisattvas* Akṣobhya and Vairocana are found. Tārā's emergence from the seed mantra *(hūmkāra bīja udbhava),*[14] describing her *mantra* body also has a parallel in Buddhist sources.

THE GEOGRAPHICAL IDENTITY OF CĪNA AND MAHĀCĪNĀ

Although the reference to Cīnā and Mahācīna occurs several times in the literary sources, the geographical identity of Cīna and Mahācīna is a vexed question with no conclusive answers. There is no doubt that the Goddess Tārā who was adopted in the fold of Daśa Mahāvidyā came from Buddhist sources. Her iconography in Tantrik works of Śakta genre clearly exemplifies her intimate Buddhist association with Akṣobhya/Śiva, her consort. So does the Vasiṣṭha legend describe the intimate connection of the Tārā cult with esoteric traditions rooted in a land distant from India.

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13. *Tārā Tantra, Śāktapramoda,* pp. 116 ff

14. See *Dhyāna, Tārā Tantra, Śaktapramoda,* p. 115, *op. cit.*

If we go by the legend, two questions are crucial: (1) the geographical location of China and (2) the journey of the Goddess from China to India. From literary evidence we may say that Mahācīna is identified in several places. The *Brahmayāmāla* [15] describes it as a place by the side of Himalaya *(hemavat-parśva)*. The *Rudrayāmāla* speaks of it as a place where followers of the *Atharvaveda*[16] live. The *Sammohana Tantra* (fourteenth century) mentions the name but does not mention its location. N.N. Bhattacharyya (1995: 12) claims that the traditional Tantrik zone extends from the Vindhyas up to Mahācīna and therefore, the cult came down from China via Bhoṭa or Tibet. If this assumption is true, it stands to reason that the route of Goddess Tārā may have been through the Silk Route, which merges on the borders of Tibet via Nepal. Although other scholars (such as Bhattacharyya, 2003: 191) do not doubt the deep connection of Tārā with China they have recourse to a set of fresh evidence put together by Swāmi Praṇavānanda's well-known book, *Kailāsa-Mānāśārovara,* which gives the first-hand account of the landscape and recaptures the sacred geography of the area. It is a territory different from Bhoṭa (Tibet) and Cīnā (China). It is a stretch that begins from Mount Kailāsa and ends at Amoranga beyond the source of river Sarayu. Mahācīna is a small territory between Mount Kailāsa and Mānāśārovara,[17] and currently falls in Tibet. This patch of land was a secluded 'no man's land' inhabited by primal communities, mainly heretics who indulged in erotic mysticism. The seclusion and the high esteem accorded to Mānāśārovara as a pilgrimage in the Brāhmanical and Mahāyānist sources made it a sacred centre. Its isolated position and lack of political patronage may be reasons for the existence of practices that could flourish without social sanction.

A third view is expressed by Agehananda Bharati (1993: 61-72), who considers that Cīna is only a nominal name, not an actual geographical name but a large area comprising parts of Tibet and Mongolia. Further, the usage of the word Cīna or Mahācīna, is a scapegoat for sanctifying a degraded practice (in the orthodox view) which would be unacceptable to the Indian people. Bharati's views are untenable, as India's long history has proved that it has an ecumenical capacity to absorb contradictory world-views.

The journey of Goddess Tārā, thus, will be charted on the basis of the position one occupies in this bristling debate. If Tārā came from China, as I fervently believe, her path would most probably be from the Silk Route. If from the hinterland of Himalayas it would be a shorter journey. But her shorter journey would still beg the question regarding the Chinese origins,

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15. B.K. Bhattacharyya, p. 190
16. *Rudrayāmala,* Chapter. 17,122, p. 261 *op. cit.*
17. For maps of Mahācīnā, See B.K. Bhattacharyya, *Tārā in Hinduism,* p. 191

and of the Chinese method of worship adapted by the Hindu Śakta traditions in Bengal. Tārā's journey may be a subject of debate, but her Buddhist origin and her absorption into the Hindu fold is indisputable. The cult of Tārā known in Hindu Tantrik sources is a product of synthesis between Buddhist and Hindu traditions. The Vasiṣṭha episode reflects a hagiography of the founder exponent of the esoteric erotocentric cult, the *Cīnācāra,* which is pursued for a quick achievement of esoteric powers. This path was introduced in eastern India, notably the sacred centre of Tārāpīṭha, in Birbhum District, West Bengal, and survives even today. The Buddha-Vasiṣṭha legend is a fine example of the way synergistic traditions (in this case, the Śākta Tantras) reconstructed their own cults by adding elements and legitimizing a new form of worship in their literary corpus. Unlike the Semitic traditions the tradition of primal communities that come from the oral autochthonous strata have left an undeniable influence in the shaping of sectarian traditions. Goddesses seldom have single origins. The cross-currents are so numerous that we have to assume that the journey of Tara was not an one-way journey but one that evolved along different pathways absorbing and perfecting a fluid stream of ideas. Cultures travel across, and the routes they take depend on the needs of the communities shaped by the ecological conditions of the environments they inhabit. The Goddess Tārā adopted from Buddhism reflects both Chinese and Tibetan traits. What is noteworthy is that she would not have crossed borders, if the boundaries between cultures had not been fluid. In that sense, her tradition is global inasmuch as it is region-specific. It is a journey that is complete in itself.

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BUDDHADEV BHATTACHARYA

The Vīrācāra Tantrik Practice of Nimba-vāsinī

NIMBA-VĀSINĪ IN BIRBHUM OF BENGAL

Under the influence of Western rationalism in the 18th century in Bengal the practice of Tantra in quest of valid reasoning had faced hegemony. Western rationalism did inspire the young intellectuals of Bengal. In course of the dominant West Asian Semitic culture in India, the Tantrik group became esoteric. In India it had flourished in the Pālā and Sena Periods of Bengal. The renaissance of Bengal condemned the Tantrik practice. Under these circumstances a group of esoteric practitioners in the district of Birbhum did forgo their family culture. But this practice was going on in secret. The Tantrik culture in 18th century non-partitioned Bengal was mystic and mythical.

This paper focuses on a study of a vīrācāra Tantrik family and their followers in Birbhum District. As the name suggests since the Sultan period of Eastern medieval India Birbhum was a settlement of valorous dreadful people, like the Birbansi, the Bāgdi, the Ankur the Bāyen etc. They claim that their ancestors had been familiar with fierce deity worship and belonged to a ferocious animist cult. Professionally they were engaged by the local governor or agents to combat in the rally as army hoards. Their ammunition was made of sharp steel of different varieties, and they did not hesitate to use them in strife. After the decline of the Murśidāvāda rule, the British did not require their service anymore in the 19th century. They were then forced to take up doubtable professions as hired laborers or as criminals.

VĪRĀCĀRA TANTRIK PRACTICE

Tantra is a complete science of self-realization through the cohesion of the mind and the body by the process of thoroughly scanning the ego-identity out bursting in perfection of cognition (jñāna) to help others. It is also the cause and effect relation of one to realize the objective of life as music creates joy within. That is enjoyed by playing on one's own self-guitar. As that is true in other instances, Tantra becomes a science.

The philosophy of Tantra is divided into two categories, according to the taste, style, and spiritual power of the Tantrik practice. The primary is nigama or the practice of the ascending order, with the goal of Nirvāṇa and the final is āgama, or the descending order to enjoy the life-drama as ever-free.

Tantra is an applied science on one's self-realization through the body, surpassing the three illusory bondages of attributes or guṇas, inertia (tamas), creativity (rajas), and essential identity (sattva) in the process of self-expansion. A Tantrik is neurologically tuning through physical, vital, mental and intellectual exercises. He/she knows the detail stages of ego-consciousness as temporal to universal culmination from the transcendental and he/she makes free the three kinds of defilements (Kleśa): Ādhibhautika (physical-vital), Ādhidaivika (vital-mental), and Ādhyātmika (mental-intellectual). Three *stati* of attainment Ādhimuktika will be exterminated by the practice of the Tantra properly. That makes Tantra a befitting applied science for spiritual upliftment.

Both the nigama and āgama come under the theoretical and applied practice. Nigama is known as dakśinācāra, the rightist practice for seeking self-development. In the case of āgama the process is called vamācāra, the leftist practice of the compassionate in good and the welfare of others.

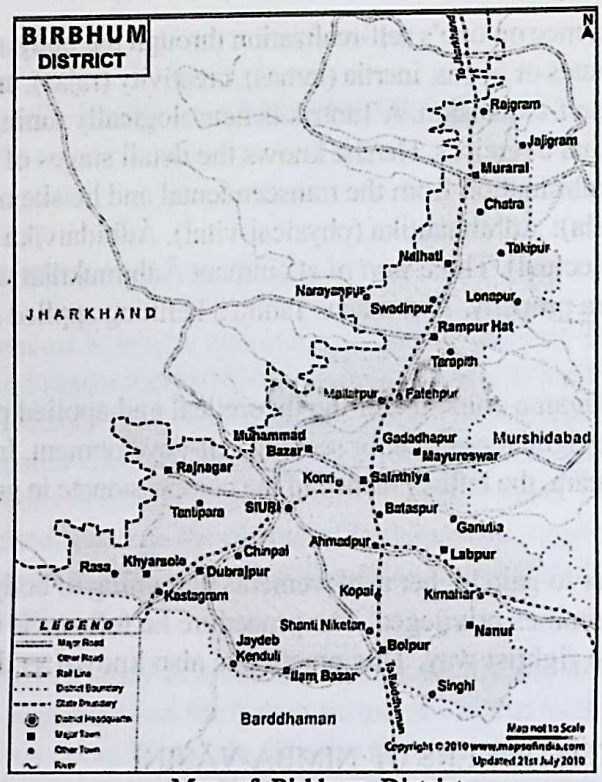
When a person is eager to gain higher achievements pertaining to body and mind, guided by the wish to excel he becomes privileged. The procedure he follows is called dakśinācāra, to achieve superiority, the rightist way. This practice is also known as the Tantrācāra.

THE VĪRĀCĀRA PRACTITIONERS OF NIMBA-VĀSINĪ ('THE DEITY UNDER THE NEEM TREE')

The Pīṭha of Nimba-vāsinī is well-known as a Vaṣiṣṭha Āshram in the district of Birbhum since long past. The popular story is that the saint Vaṣiṣṭha was directed to select his apt meditation seat here. Then the saint Vaṣiṣṭha achieved his goal by a different way of practice, which was not popular in the undivided Bengal. Later on this particular Tantrik practice was adopted by the Bhattacharya family of Behira Kalitala. The present Bhattacharya family of Behira Kalitala is continuing their vīrācāra Tantrik practice since fourteen generations according to the records. In this connection it will be not irrelevant to say that Kulācāri Pandit Batuknath Bhattacharya, the nephew of Gopeshver Bhattacharya donated more than forty manuscripts to Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan, founded by Rabindranath Tagore.

Vīrācāra practice among the esoteric group was spread in the remote areas of the locality, the forest and isolated places in Birbhum district. Vīrācāra as the name suggests is a kind of practice to avail extraordinary vigor for attaining higher efficiency. As regards the *Vīrācāra* cult in Birbhum the following information may be jotted down.

Sthirānanda (his formal name was Gopeshvar Bhattacharya) and his younger brother Canchalānanda appeared with their high esoteric attainments in the mid 19th century in the village of Behiriya (present name is Behira Kalitala; vide Birbhum Gazette of Bengal). The



Map of Birbhum District

village was situated on the left bank of Bakreshwar River, which is presently flowing southward. After seven or eight decades the course has changed oppositely from the northern direction. The locality changed, but the Pīṭha of Nimba-Vāsinī did not. The Behira Kalitala is situated 10 km from Suri and 35 km from Bolpur (Santiniketan) by road. The Pīṭha of Nimba-Vāsinī is surrounded by dense forest. The Pīṭha is very calm and quite because there is no locality within 1.5 km.

There is a seated image of Mā Nimba-Vāsinī under on a very old *Neem* Tree. The present image was made of eight metals about 200 years ago (?). The original stone inscription is very unique. The image has also much significance for the aiva, akta, and vaiśānava practitioners. The Upādhis (the name after initiation) of those practitioners who continued in this campus and practised there are mentioned in this history.

According to the tradition every Pīṭha holds petrified images of the Mother. So it becomes a seat of higher spirituality for Tantra practitioners. As stated above, vīrācāra opens a wide forum for availing the 'spiritual power' to be a vīra / hero with value. Obviously a practitioner belongs to any Tantrik fold as popularly enumerated in the Pañjadevatā Tantra (śaiva, śakta, vaiśnāva, soura or gāṇāpatī). They are different in practice. Gopeshvar Bhattacharya had been

born into a vīrācāra Tāntrik family. This family had a traditional non-formal Sanskrit education system introduced by the British (*tol* system).

The head of the family after getting his or her Tantrik sacred bath (abhiṣeka) becomes the Bhairava/Bhairavī of the Deity. He or she used to teach the vīrācāra Tantrik practice in Sanskrit to their followers only by the order of merit.

Gopeshvar Bhattacharya grew up in a Tantrik environment. His father was his spiritual *guru* and he achieved his extreme goal. Tāntrācarya Batuknath Bhattacharya was the next successful practitioner, a follower of Sthirānanda (Gopeshvar Bhattacharya). All practitioners of this family used to perform their daily duties, wearing normal dress and living in the family. Mantras are to be taken seriously along the codes of practice. They learnt specifically under a proper mantra-specialist Gurukula of the family and experiment upon the effects in the body-mind context. There are also three ways of chanting according to the guidelines of the Tantra:

1. Loud chanting (*uccharitajapa*) - to listen to the correct pronunciation and to get the resonance of the mantra in the particular nādīs connected to the particular frequencies learnt by heart along this process of chanting.

2. Whispering (*upangśujapa*) - to work out mindfulness of the earlier process along the movement of lips in silent chanting.

3. Mental (*manāsjapa*) - to be at ease memorizing and chanting the Mantra just in the mind creating the effects of the correct pronunciations spontaneously in absolute silent mantra for deeper meditation.

SPECIFIC MANDALA AND MANTRA OF THE DEITY

Particularly these family practitioners are till now following these three types of chanting in their Vīrācāra practice according to their practice stage. The Yantra is elaborately used as Mandala in this Tantrik practice. The Mandala or external drawing structure represents the internal mental function of the body by which practitioners would go from structural to non-structural cogitation.

On the other hand 'The Structure' is geometrical, representing the cosmic universe, which is secret. Geometry is the descriptive structural mathematics that connects directly body and mind within the interdependence of cause and effect. A Vīrācāra observes the internal change by such critical practice by making Mandalas externally. If he or she is incorrect in practice, he or she will be surely disturbed by the cosmic laws and will bring adverse effects to the practitioner. So, the practitioner should be absolutely knowledgeable in the matters of creating mandalas.

Mantras are sacred resonances to create ethereal effects. Every part of the Mandala should be done with accuracy in connection to cause and effect, so that no adverse effect is created for the practitioner of the Mandala. The drawings without colours but with mantra-empowerments are known as yantras. Yantras are more common in the Hindu world while coloured Mandalas are more used in Buddhist and Jaina practices. Yantras are more personal while Mandalas are more universal in the nature of practice.

An upward triangle represents the male, while a downward triangle represents the female psyche. In a male triangle the three corners represent Duality (dvaita), non-duality (advaita), and neutrality/dual-nondual (śūnya). In a female triangle the three corners represent willpower (ichcha), action power (kṛiya), and the power of cognition (jñāna).

Sthirānanda and Batuknath (Batuknath Bhattacharya), two great Sanskrit scholars, referred in a manuscript that the Vīrācāra -Dakśināācāra practice is the practice of ānanda those who achieved perfection both purṇaviśike. Both they used to practice of paňca-makāra ('The Five M'). Sthirānanda used externally paňca-upādana but not Batuknāth. So their behaviours were always in different gesticulation i.e. *adbhuta mudrā*. The adbhuta (not conditionally constituted) in Tantrik experience is neither wonder nor extraordinary, but different from the rest. A Vīrācāra practitioner accommodates the two opposite attributes (guṇas).

The structure of the Tantrik practice is based on mantra and yantra codes.

Mandalas are not only geometric drawings but are also coloured. Each of the colours of the Mandala are synchronising with the cosmic aura modules. Any misappropriate colour can end up in aura misbalance of the practitioner which can further cause energy-chaos in body-mind-environment. Practitioners should be careful about the deadly risk of independent choices of form or colour in creating a Mandala.

There are five steps of making a Mandala:

1. Construction of the particular cosmic mechanism in geometric drawings/ sculptures / etching
2. Colouring the particular parts according to the aura chart
3. Fixing particular mantras to particular parts
4. Manifesting particular embodiments in relation to the form, colour and mantras
5. Empowering the Mandala with psychic energies to work out happening.[1]

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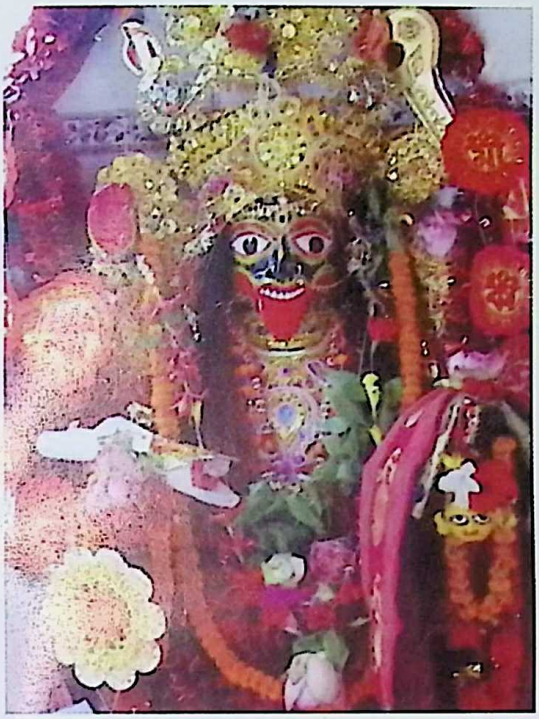
1. I would like to acknowledge KULAVADHUTA SATPURANANDAJI for taking help from his research article which he presented at Hyderabad Tantrik Institution, Hyderabad, under the title TANTRA IN ITS ESSENTIAL NATURE.



Pl. No.1: The deity image of Kalī

Pl.No.2: The sacred Neem Tree

Pl. No.3: Meditation seat in the temple complex

Pl. No.4: Batukhnath Bhattacharya performing Homa

Pl. No.5: Rudranath Bhattacharya performing a Homa ritual

Appendix

THE SEVEN ĀCARAS PRACTICES IN LITERATURE (THE CHRONOLOGICAL PRACTICES)

When man is eager to gain higher dialectical achievements pertaining to body and mind, guided by the wish to become a superman, naturally privileged, the process he follows is called dakśinacāra, the process to superiority, the Rightist Way. This group of practices is also known as in the Tantra treatises:

1. PAŞYVĀCĀRA (Practices for beginners to overrule animal nature):

Animalistic nature of human beings and humanness is their mind gained through evolution, tamed by the rigorous and peaceful practice of celibacy or self-restraint, the practice is called Paşyvācāra (paşu 'animal', ācāra 'practice of celibacy': paşupati 'The Protector of animals' i.e. Shiva).

2. VĪRĀCĀRA (Practices for a Hero)

The complexes gained through the practices of Paşyvācāra when confronted by vital and mental yogic practices growing powers of endurance and revolution, the practice is called Virācāra.

3. DIVYĀCĀRA (Practices of a Superman)

The uncompromising nature, gained through the practices of Vīrācāra, when got sublime through meditations growing patience of mind and analysis, growing deeper understanding, the practice is called Divyācāra.

The subtle superiority complex gained through the practices of dakśinācāra, when confronted through physical, vital, mental, and intellectual practices, turning the reactionary forces of life into helpful enjoyments leading to easy ecstasy, the process is called vamācara, the turning point of nature, or the Leftist Way. This group of practices is known as the Pitri/Śaiva Tantras.

4. SIDDHĀNTĀCĀRA (Practices of Final Judgement)

The subtle ego of superior privileges gained though the practice of Divyācāra when curbed through perpetual analysis of outer and inner nature, the practice is called Siddhāntācāra.

5. GUHYĀCĀRA (The Practices of a Cocoon)

The essence of understanding gained through the practices of Siddhantācāra when practised through self-empowerment of pure mind with deepest concentration, awakening the total nervous system leading up to the perpetual samādhi (ecstasy, transcendence), the practice is called guhyācāra.

The essence of the Leftist and Rightist meditation leads to the meditation of the neutral knowledge (nirālamba jňāna). The practice is Kulācāra, the Middle Way. Niruttara (Transcendental Stage of Practice) starts together with Leftist perfection of Kulācāra practice.; Liberation or Mahānirvāṇa. This is the goal of Vajrayāna.

6. KULĀCĀRA (The Practice of the Esoteric Family).

Kulācāra has three detailed steps to Perfection: Anuyoga (Kulācāra following Anābhogopāya), Mahāyoga (Kulikācāra following Śaktopāya), and Atiyoga (Kulācāra following Śambhavopāya).

The singularity gained through the lonesome way of Guhyācāra is crossed over by the practice of turning (1) competitiveness to attainment, (2) passion to compassion, (3) ignorance to all-knowledge, (4) hatred to renunciation, (5) attachment to ecstasy, and the practice is called Anuyoga of Kulācāra.

Kulikācāra (The Practice of the Family Father), or the Mahāyoga comes next to the group of Kulācāra practices. The tree of ego turned to its evolutionary seed by the practice of Kulācāra, when observed with undaunted consciousness, is burnt out by the fire of wisdom; with the deepest contemplation of pure mind the practice is called Kulikācāra.

Kulācāra (The Buddha Practice) or Atiyoga is the final perfection of the Kulācāra group of practices. The tiredness of body, mind, and intellect gained through all the practices, especially through deep contemplation of Kulikācāra, when relaxed by the practice of enjoying Śūnyatā the practice is called Kulācāra.

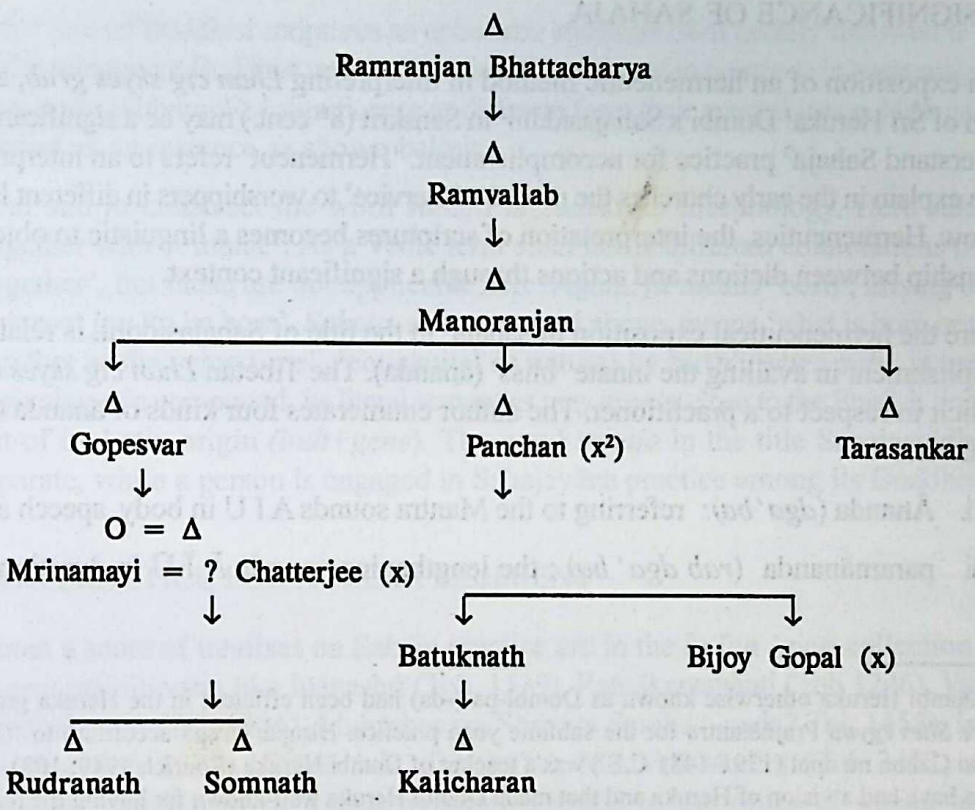
The perfection of Śūnyatā known as Sahajācāra, the Way of Spontaneity is the carefree celebration of life as it is; the never-ending journey of the true Hero.

7. ŚECHĀCĀRA (The Practice of Spontaneity).

When the Buddha is relaxed even of the practice of relaxation, when there remains no difference between esoteric and exoteric practice at all, when there is no craving for liberty anymore, when Life is as it is Nirvana; it is Śechācāra, the Self-ordained practice of spontaneity.

This state is the essence of all Perfections, when all actions culminate in Perfect Wisdom. Whatever The Great One does in easy ecstasy is the spontaneous practice. This is the achievement of non-achievement (Sahaja). The Sahaja in being is called Kulavadhuta, the spontaneous master of the Buddha world.

RECENT SĀDHAKA GENERATIONS OF NIMBU-VĀSINĪ



The last three are the present Sādhakas of Nimbu-Vāsinī

2. X = Not lineage holder

SUNITI KUMAR PATHAK

Sahajasiddhi (*Lhan cig skyes grub*) of Śrī Dombi Heruka: A Hermeneutic Exposition

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SAHAJA

An exposition of an hermeneutic method in interpreting *Lhan cig skyes grub*, a Tibetan version of Śrī Heruka[1] Dombi's Sahajasiddhi[2] in Sanskrit (8th cent.) may be a significant attempt to understand Sahaja[3] practice for accomplishment. 'Hermeneut' refers to an interpreter who used to explain in the early churches the modus of 'service' to worshippers in different languages to follow. Hermeneutics, the interpretation of scriptures becomes a linguistic to objectify the relationship between dictions and actions through a significant context.

Here the hermeneutical exposition of sahaja[4] in the title of Sahajasiddhi, is related to the accomplishment in availing the innate 'bliss' (ānanda). The Tibetan *Lhan cig skyes dgyes pa* is explicit in respect to a practitioner. The author enumerates four kinds of ānanda (*dga' ba*) in gradation.

i. Ānanda (*dga' ba):* referring to the Mantra sounds A I U in body, speech and mind

ii. paramānanda (*rab dga' ba)* : the lengthening sounds Ā Ī Ū in duration

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1. Dombi Heruka otherwise known as Dombi-pa (-da) had been efficient in the Heruka group of the *Ye Shes rgyud* Prajñātantra for the sublime yoga practice. Birupā/Virupā according to '*Gos Lo tsa ba* Gzhon nu dpal (1391-1481 C.E.) was a teacher of Dombi Heruka (Roerich 1949: 108). He is said to have had a vision of Heruka and that made Dombi Heruka well-known for having the mantra from Heruka (Taranath: *Rgyar chos 'byung*, fol. 84a: ,Chimpa and A. Chattopadhyaya (Transl). 1970: 230. Dombi Heruka, according to Taranath, succeeded to bring forth two Vajrayāna Tantra methods namely *Kurukullā Kalpa* and bi-fold *Arāli Tantra* (Vajra-Arali and Rigi-Arali.)
2. *Sahajasiddhi*, in: *Guhyadi-astasiddhi* 1986
3. *Dohākosha-vyākhyā* of Munidata (p. 71), clarifies the esoteric interpretations in multiple ways while a person is engaged in partice in cryptic words. 'In course of *Caṇḍālī-yoga* contemplation the functional mind should be placed unfickled and steady in the wheel spoke of *mahāsukha* with no inflammation, as taught by the Guru.' Vimalaprabha also corroborates in the line of *Hevajra prajñā* family in practice so that the status of the psychic will achieve an innate status on its own in the order of origination.
4. *Ibid* pp. 32-33; *Hevajra Tantra* has been followed by Dombi Heruka for the nucleus of *Sahajasiddhi*.

iii. virāmananda (*dga'bral dga'ba)* : the conjoined short vowels E O AM

iv. sahajānanda (*han cig_skyes dga'ba) :* the conjoined long vowels AI AU AH [5]

A word usually contains an explicit meaning and its implied meaning as well. According to the derivative construction its implied significance of the same word may change in some instances though it had not been the intention of the speaker. So a word requires hermeneutic interpretation in many cases.

In the case of Buddhist scriptures an aphoristic style had been usually followed in the early texts. The subsequent Buddhist authors occasionally preferred to compose in expressions having technical terms with implied significance as different from their general usage. Here sahaja may be referred as an instance as shown below:

Saha and *ja* construct the word *sahaja* is Sanskritic morphology. Here *saha* means 'together with', 'innate'. As a Vedic term *saha* holds different connotations other than 'together', but those are not applicable here. Again, *ja* means 'born', arising out of the verb root *jan* 'to be born'. *Sahaja*, as constructed above, means 'what is born or produced together at the same time', 'congenital or natural by birth', when *saha* is used in the beginning of a compound. Its literal semantics may appear close to the English 'indigenous' out of its Latin origin *(indi+gene)*. The word *sahaja* in the title Sahajasiddhi holds a separate, while a person is engaged in Sahajayāna practice among its Buddhists.

SAHAJA PRACTICE FOR ACCOMPLISHMENT

About a score of treatises on Sahaja practice are in the *bsTan 'gyur* collection ascribed to eminent practitioners like Jñānashrī (Toh. 1539), Ratnākarashānti (Toh 1246), Vajraghaṇṭā or Gaṇṭā pā (-da) (Toh 1436), Mahāshavara/Shavara Saraha (-pada? Toh 1458), Indrabhūti Madhyama (Toh 1559), Tillipā (-da, Toh 1471), Medhinī/Medinī (Toh 2402) and other practitioners. Among them Ratnākarashānti devoted to the order of sahaja unification Sahajayogakrama (Toh. 1246 *lhan cig skyes pa'i rnal 'byor gyi rim pa*) composed a manual for accomplishment in the order of *sahaja* practice.

Advayavajra (10th cent.) attempted to deal with the doctrinal aspect of sahaja enunciated in the *Hevajra Tantra* though cryptic in expression. This Tantra belongs to the Hevajra family of Prajñātantra-kula of Anuttarayoga-tantra *(bla med rgyud)*. The text propagates sahaja from bifurcated angles for the unification par excellence. The text reads that sahaja is the awakening itself bodhi on account of the following:

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5. *Amṛitakaniṇā:* 204, *Hevajra Tantra:*I.10.17

Sahaja is neither alluring nor non-alluring, nor the middle of theirs. By exclusion of above notions, sahaja becomes śūnyatā to experience unification of the individual psychic functional faculties with what is above the ethereal space. Śrī Dombi Heruka followed the line of the *Hevajra Tantra* by substantiating his practice. He quoted the *Ye shes rgyud Hevajra Tantra* text by stating that, 'Sahaja is to avail one's own by dint of the merit in rendering service to one's Guru; sahaja is not speakable nor attainable by others'.[6]

According to the author sahaja is of two kinds in respect to its arising:

i. Self-cognizable as the illuminating Bodhi-mind *(rang gis rig pa)* and

ii. For spontaneously arising in the deep psyche as self generated *(rang byung)*

The Tibetan rendering of Śrī Dombi Heruka's treatises (Toh 2223) is:

go rims rang gis rig pa ste/
tha nyid byang chub sems yin no/
ji tar 'byung 'gyur dag phyir ro/
de phyir lhan cig skyes rnam gnyis//

in comparison to its original,

yathā nyāyan sva-samvedya/
bodhicittām tu devatā/
yathodayam bhavecchūnyam/
dvi-vidham sahajamsthitam// (Sahajasiddhi, I. 5)[7]

The same verse is also found in the Hevajra Tantra. I. 8. 27.

The Tibetan rendering differs in its third foot while the Yogaratnamālā commentary clarifies the line of the original *Hevajra Tantra.* Its commentary states that the arising of sahaja is śūnyatā; that is the wisdom prajñā. Both are effulgence by characteristic; it is therefore narrated as sambodhicitta illuminated by self-nature.

Thus the accomplishment in the yoga practice in the order of sahaja amounts to avail the innate bliss sahajānanda, the highest status of availing the fourth one as already stated.

The description of sahaja as the Hevajra Tantra formulates, may be configured thus in comparison with the psychic disposition of the average. An average person is meddled in sensual allurement, rāga. Against such status, rigors of non-allurement arāga become an alternate.

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6. *Sahaja siddhi* verse 15 in chapt. 1

7. in *Guhyâdi-aḥta-siddhi Sangraha* 1987:185, Verse 5; compare *Hevajra Tantra.* 1.8.86

Or, both allurement and non-allurement may be another alternate. The *Hevajra Tantra* declines the third status in experiencing sahaja in the line of the Yogaratnamālā Commentary.

Average householder	Rigorous mendicant	Middle way of the two	Sahaja as the fourth bliss
Allurement for worldly objects	Strict discipline to observe non-allurement	Attached to both or thoroughly discard both	Accomplishing the innate partially that is lying in the blissful state.

In this regard the Mahāvagga[8] in Pāli Vinayapiṭaka may be referred to. Sākyaputra Gautama in his physical embodiment (nirmāṇakāya) had been awakened from the slumber of ignorance under the Bodhi tree to become *Buddha (sangs rgyas)*. He could visualize the states of the human mental functional faculties of all sentient beings. He divided them in three categories according to the psychic capacity of sense organs:

1. *mudi'ndiya* - beings with the average weak sense organs
2. *majjhendiya* - beings with mediocre sense organs and
3. *tikkhendiya* - beings with sharp sense organs.[9]

A sahaja practitioner belongs to the third category.

SAHAJA ORDER TOWARDS UNIFICATION

In following the order of practice the sahaja-body is regarded holistic as one of the caturkāya, the fourfold Buddha embodiment. The Vimala prabhā Commentary of the Laghu Kālacakra Tantra prescribes it as follows:

1-4 Nirmāṇa Kāya	Nirmāṇa Vāk	Nirmāṇa Citta	Nirmāṇa Jñāna
Physical constituted body with five aggregates	Audible sound out of the constituted beings	Mental functioning faculties of constituted beings	Constituted knowledge out of the mental functioning faculties citta

Similarly 5-8 Sambhoga-body etc. 9-12 Dharma-body etc., and 13-16 sahaja-kāya the innate body, sahaja-vāk the innate speech, sahaja-citta the innate functioning, Sahaja jñāna the indigenous knowledge are inexplicable.

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8. Pali Mahāvagga, Vinaya pitaka, Nalanda 1956: 1b
9. Compare *Abhidharma-kosha sputarthu Commentary* (Buddha-Bharati ed. Sarnath 1971: 63

Vimalaprabhā again distinguishes sahaja-kāya from the nirmāṇakāya constituted out of the source of origination; the latter is in the case of the physically constituted body having five aggregates like form, sensation, cognition, psychic disposition and consciousness. The Sarnath edition of the Sahajasiddhi (II 59) is however silent about the fourfold body of he Buddha (catūskāya).

In respect to a practitioner, two gradual courses in order are to observe. Advayavajra (10th cent.) elaborates that the bliss may be of four experiences as already stated. The innate Bliss to experience by an esoteric practitioner requires the two orders with relevance to four characteristics having a mark to dissolve layayoga to practice in six succeeding stages:

a) *Pratyāhāra* - dissemination separately (*so sor sdud pa)*

b) *Dhyāna* - meditation (*bsam gtan)*

c) *Prāṇāyāma* - Breathing exercise (*rog rtsol)*

d) *Dhāraṇā* - steadfastness (*'dzin pa)*

e) Anusmṛti - recollection (*rjes su dran pa)*

f) *Samādhi*- full concentration (*ting nge 'dzin)*[10]

In comparison, the Pātañjala order of practice enumerates eight.

Amṛtakaṇikā's commentary of Manjuśri Nāmasaṅgiti deals with order through Hathayoga in respect to an esoteric yogī or yoginī. The practitioner aims towards unification to achieve the innate sono vibration. The innate sono-vibration burst out with the arising of HŪM. Advayavajra in his Sangraha[11] reads thus:

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10. The Pātañjala Yogabhāṣyashyaṣra enumerates:
Yama restraint in behaviours (physical).
Niyama restraint of the mind (psychic)
Asana restraint posture for meditation
Prāṇayāma restraining the breath with watchfulness
Pratyahara restraining the sense organs
Dhāraṇa fortitude of mind
Dhyāna abstract contemplation (subjective)
Samādhi profound absorption of thought in of meditation

11. Edited by Mme. H.P. Shastri, Gaikowad Oriental Series 1927-37

HA dissolves the phenomenal cause and effect relations

Ū evaporates what is accumulated by actions so far

AM dismantles the structures in conceiving forms subjective or objective.

Thereby the functioning mental faculties submerge to dissolve with no scope to reoccur in the experience of the practitioner.

HERMENEUTIC EXPOSITION

The above discussion leaves a room to make out the implied significance of sahaja to a practitioner distinct from its literary meaning 'congenial', 'easy' in Sanskrit[12]. The individual, having fickle status of the mind, perceives the phenomenon according to the latent disposition samskāra (*'du byed)*. The knowledge regarding a phenomenon is relative; while a sahaja practitioner experiences that separately. The innate sahaja arises as original as a state the practitioner holds in the psyche.

OM ĀH HŪM

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12. Monier Williams, *Sankrit-English Dictionary* 2005:1193

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DANGSONG NAMGYAL

The History of Bon Tantra

RESUMÉ

The Secret Tantra tradition of Bon was chiefly propagated by Lord sTon pa gShen rab preceded by the 'Immortal Triad Mother, Son and gShen (*'chi med yum sras gshen gsum)* before immeasurable myriads of eras. There are many elucidated descriptions in all the successor lineages of the Bon tradition on the Secret Bon Tantras. Virtually, the Bon Tantra tradition had flourished before the expositions of the three consecutive turnings of the Wheel on subjects like Vinaya, Abhidharma, Sutra and Tantra by sTon pa gShen rab. Afterwards, the Bon Lineage was known as *gsang 'dus gshen gsum.* They were followed by the Six Great Lineage Teachers of Bon.

According to the history of Bon the Secret Tantra Tradition is divided into three categories on the basis of its propagation. 1. The Early period (King gNya' khri to the early part of the life of gDri gum) 2. The Medieval Period (Spread of the Tantra Doctrine); 3. The period of revealing the Treasures (11th century onwards). Moreover, the Bon traditions are ramified in outer, inner and secret. The pristine sTon pa Bon tradition was recognized as *gShen lha 'od dkar* and the primordial secret Tantra tradition is recognized as *sTon pa kun tu bzang po.*

There is an interesting account on 'Dran pa Nam mkha'. He was believed to be a predicted saint of sTon pa gShen rab. He became highly recognized for restoring Bon in Tibet having become the spiritual teacher of King gNya khri. Later, it was transmitted to 13 lineage teachers and four scholars.

The masters of these lineages practiced at places such some of which were particularly unknown, as the Thirty Peaks of Mount Sumeru and the Nine Secret Places, the Seven Meetings Points *('dus gnas)* and in regard to the Mother Tantras *(ma rgyud)* The Twenty Sites. There exists various collections of scriptures, apart from the 'Treasures, also *bka' ma,* the canonical writings, are accepted. As the *gter* tradition prevails, this and the oral tradition is mainly elaborated here.

Bon Mother Tantra

གཡུང་དྲུང་བོན་གྱི་སྡེགས་བསྟན་ཐ་དར་དང་འཕེལ་བའི་བརྒྱུད་རིམ་ངོས་འཛིན་སྐོར།

དྲང་སྲོང་རྣམ་རྒྱལ།

ང་ཚོས་བོན་ལུགས་ཀྱི་ཕྱི་ཚུལ་ཁག་ཅིག་ཐོགས་བཟློམས་བྱས་ན། ཐུར་བསྐལ་པ་ཡ་ཐོག་ཏུ་མང་བཀུར་རྒྱལ་པོ་བྱུང་ཕྱེ་ཆེས་ཐོག་མར་འཛིག་རྟེན་གྱི་རིག་བྱེད་དང་ཆུ་སྟེགས་ཝོགས་འཛིག་རྟེན་ཕྱན་ཚོགས་ལྟར་ཡོད་ཀྱི་ཡོད་ཁ་ཏོ་ནར་གསུངས་པ་དང་། དེ་ནས་ཐུམ་ཆུ་ཆ་གསུམ་ལ་སོགས་ཕྱི་ཡི་གནས་ཐུ་འཆི་མེད་ཡུམ་ཐས་གཤེན་གསུམ་གྱིས་ཐྱི་ཐྲུང་ས་ཝོགས་གསང་བ་ཐུགས་ཀྱི་བོན་དེ་དག་གཏུལ་བྱ་བློ་མཆོག་རྣམས་ལ་གསུངས་པ་ནི་ཕལ་ཆེར་འདོད་ཁམས་ཀྱི་གཏུལ་བྱ་ལ་གསུངས་པ་ལྟ་བུར་ཡོད་དོ། ། དེ་ནས་མི་ཡུལ་དུ་སྟོན་པ་གཤེན་རབ་ཀྱིས་གསང་ཐུགས་ཀྱི་བོན་མང་དུ་གསུངས་པ་ཡོད་ནའང། སྟོན་པ་གཤེན་རབ་ནི་ཡོངས་གྲགས་ཕྱི་རྒྱུད་མདོ་ཡི་སྟོན་པའི་ཚུལ་དུ་བྱོན་པར་སྟོན་པ་གཤེན་རབ་ཀྱི་རྣམ་ཐར་ཁག་ནས་གསལ་བ་ཡིན་ལ། ཕྱི་རྒྱུད་ཐམས་ཅད་སྣལ་པའི་སྐུ་ལས་བརྒྱུད་ཅེས་པའི་དོན་ཡང་དེ་ཡིན་ནོ། །གཤེན་རབ་ཀྱིས་འདུལ་མངོན་མདོ་སྡེ་སོགས་གང་གསུངས་པ་དེ་དག་སྐུགས་ཀྱི་ཆ་ལག་གི་ཚུལ་དུ་ཡོད་པས་མདོ་ཐུགས་གཉིས་དོན་དུ་མི་འགལ་ལོ་ཞེས་བཞེད་པའང་ཡོད་དོ། །སྟོན་པ་གཤེན་རབ་སྐུ་གཤེགས་ནས་ལོ་ཉེར་བརྒྱད་ན་འོལ་བློང་དུ་གསང་ཐུགས་ཀྱི་བསྟན་པ་བྱུང་ཚུལ་བཤད་པ་ཕྱར་ན་སྟོན་པ་ཞལ་བཞུགས་དུས་སུ་ཆེར་མེད་པར་སྣང་ངོ། །

བོད་དུ་ས་ངས་རྒྱས་བསྟན་པ་སྒྲི་ཡི་དབང་དུ་བྱས་ན་ཐུ་རབས་མཁས་པ་ཁ་ཅིག་གིས་མདོ་ཐུགས་གཉིས་མེ་ཏུ་ཕྱར་བཞེད་པ་བྱུང་བ་དེར་མཁས་པས་དགག་བཞག་མཐའ་ཡས་པ་བྱུང་ཡོད་དོ། །བོན་དཔེ་ཁག་ཅིག་ལས་བརྗོད་ཚུལ་འདྲ་མིན་གསལ་ཡང་། བོན་གྱི་མཁས་མཆོག་མ་ཉམ་མེད་ཤེས་རབ་རྒྱལ་མཚན་གྱིས་མདོ་ཐུགས་ཟུང་འཕེལ་གྱི་ལམ་སྲོལ་བརྟན་པོ་བཙུགས་ཡོད་པ་དེས་བོན་བསྟན་ལ་མདོ་ཐུགས་ཟུང་འཕེལ་གྱི་དཔེ་མཚོན་རང་བཞིན་གྱི་ཐབས་ཤེས་ཤིག་སྟོན་ཡོད་པ་གསལ་བར་བྱས་འདུག ཐུ་དར་རྒྱུད་རིམ་སྐབས་སུ་རྒྱུ་འཐས་ཀྱི་བོན་གཉིས་འགལ་མེད་དུ་ཕྱོད་ཚུལ་གསལ་བའི་དཔེ་ཁག་ཀྱང་མི་ཉུང་བ་ཡོད་པ་རེད།ཁྱབ་ཐོགས་ཀྱི་ཞིབ་འཇུག་པ་ནས་ནས་བོད་བཅན་པོའི་སྐབས་སུ་བོན་ལ་མ་ལག་ཚང་བའི་གཞུང་ལུགས་མེད་པར་བརྗོད་མཁན་མང་དུ་ཡོད་པ་ནི་དེང་དུས་བོན་ལུགས་པ་ནས་ཀྱི་ཤོད་ཟྭངས་དང་མི་འདྲ་བ་ཡིན།

བོན་ལུགས་གསང་ཐུགས་ཀྱི་བསྟན་པ་དར་ཚུལ་ཐང་ལ། ཆོ་ལོ་དཔག་མེད་ནས་རིམ་བཞིན་སྟོན་པ་ཅི་རིགས་བྱོན་པའི་ཚུལ་བོན་ཀྱི་ལོ་རྒྱུས་དག་ནས་གསལ་བ་ལྟར་ན། སྟོན་པ་དེ་དག་གིས་གསང་ཐུགས་སོགས་བསྟན་པ་ཅི་རིགས་ཐེལ་བར་གསལ་ནའང། སྐབས་འདིར་ཐུགས་ཀྱི་བསྟན་པ་ནི་སྟོན་པ་གཤེན་རབ་ཀྱི་ཡར་ཐོན་དུ་ཕྱོད་པའི་འཆི་མེད་ཡུམ་ཐས་གཤེན་གསུམ་ཀྱིས་ཐོག་མར་གསུངས་པའི་ཚུལ་ལ་གོ་དགོས་པ་ལས། བོན་ལུགས་ཡོངས་གྲགས་ལྟར་ན། སྟོན་པ་གཤེན་རབ་ཀྱིས་བཀའ་འགོར་རིམ་པ་གསུམ་བསྐོར་བ་དེ་དག་གི་ནང་ནས་གསང་ཐུགས་གསུངས་པར་བཤད་ཡོད་པ་འདི་གཅིག་ཐུ་ལ་གོ་ན་མི་འགྲིག་པ་ཡིན། ཚུལ་འདི་ནི་བོན་ཀྱི་མཁས་དབང་ཐ་སྐོ་ལ་ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས་

རྒྱལ་མཚན་གྱིས་གསལ་པོར་གསུངས་ཡོད་ལ། སྟོན་པ་གཤེན་རབ་ནི་མི་ཡི་ཚེ་ལོ་བཅུ་པའི་དུས་སུ་བྱུང་བ་དང་། དེའི་སྔོན་ཚེ་ལོ་དཔག་མེད་དང་ཁྲི་པ་སོགས་ཀྱི་སྐབས་སུ་གསང་སྔགས་ཀྱི་བསྟན་པ་བྱུང་ཡོད་པ་དང་། གསང་འདུས་གཤེན་གསུམ་དང་། ཐུ་མ་ཆེ་བྱུག་ནི་ཆེས་ཡ་ཐོག་གི་སྐབས་སུ་བྱུང་བ་དང་དེ་དག་གིས་གསང་སྔགས་ཀྱི་བསྟན་པ་སྒོལ་བར་གསུངས་ཡོད། བོད་ཀྱི་མཁས་པས་བཞེད་ཚུལ་ཞིག་ལ་འཆི་མེད་གཙུག་ཕུད་དང་། གསང་བ་འདུས་པ། ཐུག་ལ་མེ་འབར་གསུམ་ནི་སྟོན་པ་གཤེན་རབ་ཀྱི་སྐུ་གསུང་ཐུགས་ཀྱི་སྒོས་པ་སྟོན་པ་ཡིན་པས་དོན་དུ་སྟོན་པ་གཤེན་རབ་ཀྱི་སྒོལ་པ་ཡིན་ནོ་ཞེས་བཤད་ལ། མཁས་དབང་སྒ་ཐོན་ཀྱིས་སྟོན་པ་གཤེན་རབ་ཀྱང་དུ་མ་ཡོད་པར་གསུངས་སོ། །

བོད་དུ་དར་བའི་རིམ་པ་ལ་དུས་ཕྱིས་བོན་ལུགས་པ་ནམས་ཀྱིས་བོད་རྒྱལ་གཤལ་ཁྲིའི་སྲོན་དུ་ཐུགས་བསྟན་ཆེས་ཆེར་དར་བར་བཤད་པ་ཡོད་ཀྱང་། བོད་དུ་དར་བའི་དབང་དུ་བྱས་ན་བོད་རྒྱལ་ཐོག་མ་གཤལ་ཁྲི་བཙན་པོས་བོན་གྱི་དགེ་བརྩེས། ཞེས་སུ་གྲགས་པས་བོད་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་ཐོག་དང་པོ་གཤལ་ཁྲི་བཙན་པོ་དང་། གཤེན་པོ་སྟང་བ་མདོག་ཅན་གཤེས་ཟུང་འཇུག་ཀྱིས་གསང་སྔགས་ཀྱི་བསྟན་པ་བཙུགས་པར་བཤད་ཡོད་པ་ནི་བོན་ལུགས་ཡོངས་གྲགས་ཀྱི་ལྷ་ཚུལ་ཞིག་རེད། གཤལ་ཁྲིའི་ཐུས་མུ་ཁྲི་བཙན་པོ་ཞེས་པ་དེ་བླ་མ་ཆེ་བྱུག་ནང་ཚན་ཀྱི་རྩུ་ཁྲི་བཙན་པོ་ལ་འཛིག་པ་ནི་བོན་ཀྱི་མཁས་པ་མཐའ་དག་གི་བཞེད་པ་མིན་ཏེ། ཐུ་སྟོན་ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས་རྒྱལ་མཚན་ཀྱིས་བླ་མ་ཆེ་བྱུག་ནང་ཚན་ཀྱི་རྩུ་ཁྲི་ནི་ཡོ་རྒྱན་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་པོ་ཞིག་ཡིན་ཚོད་གསུངས་ཡོད་པས་སོ། །

བོད་རྒྱལ་གནམ་ཀྱི་ཁྲི་བྱུག་གིས་བསྟན་པའི་གཞུང་བཟང། བོན་རྒྱལ་ཆེ་བཞིས་ཕྱོགས་མཐར་སྒྲོལ་ཞིས་པའང་དོད་ཀྱི་ས་ཁྱོན་ཁོ་ནའི་དབང་དུ་བྱས་པའི་བཤད་པ་ཞིག་རེད། དེ་བཞིན་ལྷགས་བསྟན་ལ་ལྷ་དར་དང་། བར་དར་དང་། ཕྱི་དར་གསུམ། ལྷ་དར་ནི། རྒྱལ་པོ་གཤལ་ཁྲི་ནས་གྲི་ཁུམ་ཀྱི་ཚེ་སྟོད་ཡན་ཆད་དང་། བར་དར་ནི། སྲུ་ཛེ་གུང་རྒྱལ་ནས་ཁྲི་སྲོང་གི་ཚེ་སྟོད་ཡན་ཆད་དང་། ཕྱི་དར་ནི་དུས་རབས་བཅུ་གཅིག་བར་གཏེར་ཐོན་པའི་དུས་ཏེ་ཁྱད་པར་དུ་གཏེར་སྟོན་ཟླ་དགས་གཏེར་ཐོན་པ་ནས་ངོས་འཛིན་བྱེད་པའི་ཚུལ་དེ་དག་ཡིན་ནོ། ། །

བོད་དུ་གསང་སྔགས་ཀྱི་བསྟན་པ་ཐོག་མར་ཇི་ལྟར་དར་བའི་ཚུལ་དེར་གཤེན་པོ་སྟང་བ་མདོག་ཅན་ལོ་ཆུས་དང་འཇེལ་ནས་ཤོད་དགོས་པ་ཡིན་པས། དེའི་ཕྱོར་ཀྱི་དཔྱད་གཞིའི་ཡིག་ཚ་འཚོལ་བ་ལ་བཙོན་དགོས་པ་ནི་གལ་ཆེ་ཤྱམ། བོན་ཀྱི་མཁས་པ་རྒྱུས་ལོན་ནོན་ཆེན་འོད་ཟེར་ཀྱིས་ཁྲོ་འགྱེལ་དུ་གཤེན་པོ་སྟང་བ་མདོག་ཅན་ཀྱི་ཕྱུག་གནས་ཐུ་བཀྲང་བའི་རི་རྒྱལ་ལྷུན་ཡོའི་ཕོ་ཐང་ཟེར་བ་དེ་རི་རབ་ལྷུན་ཡོ་ལ་འདོད་པ་མང་ཡང། ཁོང་གི་བཞེད་ཕྱོགས་ཐུ་ལྷག་གཟིག་གི་གནས་ཤིག་ཡིན་པར་གསུངས་ཡོད་པ་རེད། བོན་དཔེ་དག་ལས་གཤེན་སྟང་བ་མདོག་ཅན་ཀྱིས་ཐེམས་ཕྱོགས་བོན་མོ་ལྷག་ལེར་ལི་ལྷེར་ལ་བཤད་ཅིང་། ལྷགས་ཕྱོགས་རྒྱལ་པོ་ཐུ་ཁྲི་བཙན་པོ་ལ་བཤད་ནས། ཏ་ར་ཅི་པར་ཀྱིས་ལྷགས་ཐེམས་ཀྱི་རྒྱུད་ཁ་གཤེས་ཀ་མཚོས་པས་དེ་མན་ལྷགས་ཐེམས་རྒྱུད་ཁ་གཅིག་ཡིན་ནོ་ཞེས་ཤོད་པར་ཐུབ་བོ། །འདི་དང་འདིའི་ཚུལ་ལ་ཞིབ་ཏུ་བརྟག་དགོས་པ་གལ་ཆེན་ཡིན་ཡང་སྐབས་འདིར་ལྷན་ཀྱིས་ཞིབ་ལྷའི་བརྟག་པ་རེ་ཞིག་བཞག་ནས་ལྷ་དར་བོན་ཀྱི་གསང་ལྷགས་རྒྱུད་རིམ་ངོས་འཛིན་ཇི་ལྟར་ཐུབ་ཕྱོགས་སྐོར་ཞིག་བྱེད་རྒྱུ་ཡིན།

དེ་ཡང་བོན་ལུགས་ཡོངས་གྲགས་སུ་བོན་ཕྱི་ནང་གསང་གསུམ་ལ་ལྟོས་ཏེ་ཕྱི་རྒྱུད་ཐམས་ཅད་སྒྲོལ་བའི་སྐུ་ལས་བརྒྱུད་པ་དང་། ནང་རྒྱུད་ཐམས་ཅད་ཇོག་གས་པའི་སྐུ་ལས་བརྒྱུད་པ་དང་། གསང་རྒྱུད་ཐམས་ཅད་བོན་ཀྱི་སྐུ་ལས་བརྒྱུད་པའི་ཚུལ་བཤད་ཡོད་ནའང་། འདིར་བཤད་པར་བྱ་བ་གསང་ལྷགས་ཀྱི་སྐབས་སུའང་བརྒྱུད་ཁུངས་ཀྱི་སྟོན་

པ་ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་པོར་བཞག་ཡོད་པ་ནི་སྐབས་འདིར་བདེར་གཤེགས་དགོངས་རྒྱུད་ཀྱི་ཐོག་མར་སྟོན་པ་ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་པོ་ཡིན་པ་འདིས་མཚོན་ཐུབ་པ་རེད། དེ་ཡང་ཐོག་མའི་སྟོན་པ་འདི་ནི་གཤེན་ལྷ་འོད་དཀར་ལ་ངོས་འཛིན་པ་ཡིན་ལ། གཤེན་ལྷ་འོད་དཀར་ལ་རྣམ་དབྱེ་དུ་མར་ཕྱེས་ནས་བསྟན་ཡོད་དེ། གཅིག བོན་ལུགས་གསང་སྔགས་དང་སེམས་ཕྱོགས་ཀྱི་ལྟ་བའི་གཞི་སེམས་ཉིད་དམ་སེམས་ཀྱི་གནས་ལུགས་དེ་ཉིད་ལ་སེམས་རང་བྱུང་གི་གཤེན་ལྷ་དཀར་པོ་ཞེས་པའི་ཐ་སྙད་ཐོག་ཏུ་ངོས་འཛིན་བྱས་ཡོད་པ་ནི་གདགས་སུ་མེད་པའི་གཤེན་ལྷ་འོད་དཀར་ཞེས་ཟེར། །གཉིས། གཟུགས་ཁམས་བཅུ་བདུན་གྱི་ཡ་ཐ་འོག་མིན་འདའ་བ་མེད་པའི་ཕོ་བྲང་ངམ། སྟུག་པོ་བཀོད་པའི་ཞིང་ཁམས་སམ། འོག་མིན་གནམ་གྱི་ལྷ་གནས་སུ། ཞི་ཁྲོའི་ལྷ་ཚོགས་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི་སྤྲོ་བསྡུའི་གཞིར་གྱུར་པའི་རྩ་བའི་ལྷ་ངེས་པ་ལྔ་དང་ལྡན་པའི་ལོངས་སྤྱོད་རྫོགས་སྐུའི་རྣམ་པ་ཅན་དེ་ཡིན་ཞིང་། དེ་ལ་གདགས་སུ་ཡོད་པའི་གཤེན་ལྷ་འོད་དཀར་ཞེས་ཐ་སྙད་བྱེད་པ་ཡིན་ནོ། །སེམས་ཕྱོགས་ནས་འོག་མིན་གྱི་དབྱེ་བ་མང་དུ་བསྟན་ཡོད་པ་མ་ཟད། རྩ་གསུམ་གྱི་གནས་དང་དེའི་ཆ་ཤས་ལའང་འོག་མིན་གྱི་སྒྲ་སྦྱར་བ་ཡོད་དོ། །

ཚད་མེད་འོད་ལྡན་ནི།གཟུགས་ཁམས་གཙང་མ་རིགས་ལྔའི་གནས་ཀྱི་ནང་ཚན་ཤིན་ཏུ་མཐོང་བའི་ལྷ་གནས་སམ་བོན་ལུགས་སུ་བར་ལྷ་འོད་གསལ་གྱི་ཞིང་དུ་བྱོན་པར་གསལ།དེ་ནི་གཤེན་ལྷ་འོད་དཀར་གྱི་སྤྲུལ་པ་འོད་ཟེར་ལས་བྱུང་བའི་མི་ཞིག་ཡིན་པར་གསལ་བ་ལས། མཛད་པ་གང་དང་གང་གནང་བ་སོགས་གནས་ཚུལ་གསལ་པོ་ནི་ཤིན་ཏུ་དཀོན་པར་མཐོང་ངོ་། །

འཕྲུལ་གཤེན་སྣང་ལྡན་ནི། ཐོག་མར་རིན་པོ་ཆེའི་སྒོང་ལས་སྤྲུལ་པའི་འདབ་ཆགས་ཤིག་བྱུང་སྟེ་གསུང་ཕྱུང་ནས་སེམས་ཅན་ལ་བོན་བསྟན་ཏེ་འགྲོ་དོན་དུ་མ་མཛད། དེ་ནས་འགྲོ་བ་རང་མཐུན་གྱི་ཆ་ལུགས་སུ་བསྟན་པར་དགོངས་ཏེ་རྩ་གསུམ་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་ཁང་བཟང་གི་སྟོ་ནུབ་ཤེལ་གྱི་རྡོ་རིང་གི་ཁ་ནས་ཐུར་གྱི་རྫུ་འཕྲུལ་བཤིགས་ནས་མི་དཀར་གཡུ་ཡི་ཐོར་ཙུག་དང་འོད་ཀྱི་ན་བཟའ་ཅན་ཞིག་ཏུ་སྤྲུལ་པ་དེ་རྨ་མི་གྲོང་བདུན་གྱི་མི་རིགས་ཀྱིས་མཐོང་ནས་བརྒྱ་བྱིན་ལ་མཆེད་བཏང་བས་བརྒྱ་བྱིན་གྱིས་འོག་མིན་ལྷ་ཡི་གནས་ནས་སྤྲུལ་པ་སྟོན་པར་ཤེས་ཏེ་མཆོད་བསྟོད་དང་འགྲོ་དོན་བྱེད་པར་གསོལ་བ་བཏབ་པས་དེས་ཀྱང་ཡིན་ལུགས་ལུང་བསྟན་པ་ལྟར་ལྷ་ཡི་དབང་པོས་མཚན་དུ་འཕྲུལ་གཤེན་སྣང་ལྡན་ཞེས་གསོལ། དེས་བསྒྲགས་པ་སྐོར་གསུམ་སོགས་གསུངས་པར་བཤད་དོ། །

བཟང་ཟ་རིང་བཙུན་ནི། རྩ་གསུམ་གྱི་གནས་བྱང་ཕྱོགས་དགའ་བ་མེ་ཏོག་མཛེས་པའི་ཚལ་ན་གླིང་དགུ་འཁྱིལ་བའི་རྒྱ་མཚོའི་ནང་དུ་བྱམས་མའི་ཐུགས་རྗེ་ལས་ཤེལ་གྱི་སྦུ་བ་གུར་ཙམ་པ་ཞིག་སྲིད་པ་དེར་ལྷ་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་མཆོད་པས་ཞག་གསུམ་དྲོས་བཞིར་སྒོང་གར་འདྲིལ་ནས་སྒོང་ང་བཟོལ་བའི་སྙིང་པོར་མཚན་དང་ལྡན་པའི་བུད་མེད་བཟང་མོ་ཞིག་བྱུང་བ་དེ་མེ་ཏོག་གི་གླིང་དུ་སྤྱན་དྲངས། ཚན་ཁྲུས་ནས་བཏོན་ཏེ་རིན་པོ་ཆེའི་ཁྲི་མངའ་གསོལ་ཏེ་ལྷ་ཡི་དབང་པོ་བརྒྱ་བྱིན་གྱིས་བཟང་ཟ་རིང་བཙུན་ཞེས་མཚན་གསོལ་ཏེ་ལྷ་ཁམས་ལ་བོན་བསྟན་པས་ཕན་བདེ་རྒྱས་པར་གྱུར་པའི་ཚུལ་བཤད་དོ། །

འཆི་མེད་གཙུག་ཕུད་ནི། འཕྲུལ་གཤེན་སྣང་ལྡན་གྱིས་སྤྲུལ་པའི་ཁུ་བྱུག་ཅིག་ཡུམ་བཟང་ཟའི་ཕྲག་པར་བབས་ནས་ཏྲོད་བརྡན་ཏེ་བྱིན་གྱིས་བརླབས་པས། ཕྱི་ལོར་སྲས་ཤིག་འཁྲུངས་པ་དེ་ཕ་མེད་པའི་བུ་སྐྱེས་པར་ཡུམ་ངོ་ཚ་ནས་བྱི་མའི་ཁང་བུར་སྦས་པས། ཞག་དགུར་ལྷས་བཟང་གིས་རྒྱན་བྱས་ཏེ་ཡུམ་གྱིས་བརྟགས་པས་དབུ་ལ་ཨུཥྞཱི་ཀྱི་གཙུག་ཏོར་གསུམ་ སྐྱེས་ནས་གཟི་བྱིན་ལྡན་པར་བཞུགས་པ་དང་། ཤིན་ཏུ་ངོ་མཚར་བའི་མཛད་པ་དུ་མ་མཛད་ཅིང་བཞུགས་པར་ཡུམ་དགའ་བ་སྐྱེས་ནས་མཚན་དུ་འཆི་མེད་གཙུག་ཕུད་ཅེས་གསོལ་ཏོ། །དེ་ཡང་བརྒྱ་བྱིན་གྱིས

ཞབས་ནས་བཏེག་སྟེ་འགྲོ་དོན་མཛད་པར་གསོལ་བ་བཏབ་པས་དེ་བཞིན་དུ་མཛད་པའོ། །

གཤེན་གསང་བ་འདུས་པ་ནི། སྟོན་པ་འཆི་མེད་གཙུག་ཕུད་ལ་ཡུམ་བཟང་ཟས་གསོལ་བ་བཏབ་པ་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས་སེམས་ཀྱི་མི་ཆུང་མཐེ་བོང་ཙམ་ཞིག་ཡིད་ཀྱི་རྟ་ཕོ་སྦྲང་བུ་ཙམ་ཞིག་ལ་བསྐྱོན་ནས་འོག་མིན་ལ་མཁའ་ཀློང་དབྱིངས་ཀྱི་ཐུགས་དམ་བསྐུལ་ཏེ་བྱིན་གྱིས་བརླབས་ནས་ཡུལ་ཤོད་མ་གསེར་སྟེང་དུ་མཁར་བང་བ་ལིང་ལིང་སྟག་རྩེ་བྱ་བ་རུ་ཡབ་ཉེ་དབང་རྒྱལ་པོ་ཞི་བ་འོད་ལྡན་དང་།ཡུམ་ལྷ་མོ་སྤྱིན་མཛེས་མ་གཉིས་ཀྱི་སྲས་སུ་འཁྲུངས།མཚན་དང་ལྡན་པའི་སྲས་དེ་དགུང་ལོ་གསུམ་ལོན་པ་ནས་གཡུ་ལུང་ཤེལ་བྲག་ཕུག་ཏུ་ཡབ་ཡུམ་སྲས་གསུམ་གྱི་སྤྱན་སྔར་བྱོན་ནས་མེ་ཏོག་ཨུཏྤལ་སྔོན་པོ་དགུ་ལ་འདབ་མ་དགུ་བརྩེགས་དང་། འདབ་མ་རེ་ལ་འབྲུ་མ་རེ་ཡོད་པ་ཞིག་ཕྱུལ་ནས་ཐུགས་ཀྱི་གདམས་ངག་ཞུས་པས། སྟོན་པས་ཨུཏྤལ་བྱང་སེམས་དང་། འདབ་མ་དགུ་བརྩེགས་ཐེག་པའི་སྣོད་ལྡན་དང་། ཐིག་ལེ་དགུ་ཤར་བ་ཐེག་པའི་དོན་སོགས་མཚོན་ཤུས་པའི་རྟེན་འབྲེལ་དུ་དགོངས་ཏེ་གསས་མཁར་གསང་བ་སྒོ་དགུའི་དབང་བསྐུར། བསྙེན་སྒྲུབ་བྱིན་རླབས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་བྱིན། མན་ངག་གབ་སྐུང་གི་རླབས་རྒྱལ། གསང་སྔགས་ཀྱི་བསྟན་པའི་གཏེར་གཏད་ནས་མཚན་གསང་བ་འདུས་པ་ཞེས་གསོལ། འཆི་མེད་གཙུག་ཕུད་ཀྱིས་ལུང་བསྟན་པ་ལྟར་གསང་བའི་བྲག་ཕུག་དགུ་རྒྱུད་དུ་བསྒྲུབས་པ་མཛད་དེ། རྒྱུ་ཡི་ཐེག་པ་བཞི་ཡིས་ཕན་བདེའི་སྒོ་འབྱེད། འབྲས་བུའི་ཐེག་པ་བཞི་ཡིས་ལམ་གྱི་དོན་བསྒྲུབས། བླ་མེད་ཐེག་པས་ཉག་གཅིག་མཐར་ཕྱུང་སྟེ་རྒྱུ་འབྲས་རྣམ་པར་འབྱེད་པའི་གསང་དོན་དང་ལྡན་པས་གསང་བ་འདུས་པ་ཞེས་གྲགས་ཤིང་། ལྷ་སྲིན་གཡེན་སྡེ་དྲེགས་པ་ཅན་རྣམས་དབང་དུ་བསྡུས་ནས་དམ་ལ་བཏགས་ཏེ་སྔགས་ཀྱི་བསྟན་པ་དར་བར་མཛད་པའོ། །

སྟག་ལ་མེ་འབར་ནི། སྟོན་པའི་ཐུགས་ལས་སྤྲུལ་པ་ཡབ་ལིག་ཞི་སད་ལྷེར་དང་། ཡུམ་སྟག་ཟ་ཧེ་ཧིང་མ་གཉིས་ལ་མཚན་ལྟས་བཟང་པོ་དང་བཅས་ཏེ་ཕྱི་ལོ་དགུང་ཚེས་བཅུ་དྲུག་ལ་བལྟམས་པ་མིའི་ལུས་ལ་སྟག་གི་རི་མོ་བཀྲ་བ། གཟིག་གི་ཐིག་ལེ་ལ་གྲུང་གི་ཕྱལ་ཕྱོལ་དོད་པ། རལ་པ་ཛི་སྒྲིན་དམར་སེར་གྱེན་དུ་བརྫེས་པ། སྤྱན་མིག་དམར་པོ་ཟུར་གསུམ་པ། སྐན་ནི་དྲང་ལ་གདེང་བ་ལ་སོགས་པའི་ཁྲོ་བོའི་ཆ་བྱད་དང་ལྡན་པ་ཞིག་ཏུ་བྱུང་བས། ཡབ་ཡུམ་དོགས་པ་སྐྱེས་ཏེ་འཆི་མེད་ཡུམ་སྲས་ལ་ཞུས་པ། དེ་ནི་བདུད་སྲིན་སྒྲོལ་བྱེད་དུ་ལྷ་ཡིས་སྤྲུལ་པ་སྟོན་པ་ཡིན་པས་གཤེན་གསང་བ་འདུས་པ་སྤྱན་དྲངས་ལ་བྱིན་རླབས་ཞུས་ཤིག་ཅེས་ལུང་བསྟན་པ་ལྟར་མཛད་པ་དང་། ཁྱད་པར་དགུང་ལོ་དགུ་བཞེས་ནས་ཡུམ་སྲས་གཤེན་གསུམ་གསང་འདུས་བཅས་ལས་དྲག་པོ་སྔགས་ཀྱི་དབང་བསྐུར། བསྙེན་སྒྲུབ་ལས་གསུམ་གྱི་གཏེར་གཏད། མཐུ་སྟོབས་རྩེ་དཔལ་གྱི་སྟོབས་བྱིན། བདུད་དང་སྲིན་པོའི་གཉེན་པོ་རུ་བསྐོས། སྲི་སྲུངས་གསང་བ་སྒོ་དགུ་གཏད་ལ་ཕབ། ཉེ་དབང་གི་རྒྱལ་པོ་ཀུན་ཏུ་འཛིན་གྱི་བུ་མོ་ཀུན་སྣང་གསལ་མ་དང་། རྒྱལ་པོ་ཁྲི་ལྷེར་འོད་དཔུང་གི་སྲས་མོ་བདེ་བ་བསེན་ཐུབ་མ་གཉིས་གསང་བའི་གྲོགས་སུ་བཙལ། ལྷག་པར་གཤེན་གསང་བ་འདུས་པའི་ཐུགས་བཅུད་ལོན་ནས་དཔལ་གྱི་རི་བོ་ཟུར་གསུམ་དུ་སྟོན་པ་གཤེན་རབ་ཀྱིས་ལུང་བསྟན་པ་ལྟར་ཐུགས་རྗེ་བྱམས་མ་བསྒྲུབས་པས་ལྷ་མཁའ་འགྱིང་རྒྱལ་པོ་ཞལ་མཐོང་། དཔལ་གསས་ངམ་པའི་སྐུར་སྤྲུལ། བདུད་སྲིན་གྱི་ཚོ་འཕྲུལ་བཟློག ཕྱར་མ་ཉེར་བདུན་སོགས་མ་མོ་ཐམས་ཅད་བྲན་དུ་བཀོལ་ཏེ་སྡོད་གཏོང་ཞི་བར་བྱས། བསྙེན་སྒྲུབ་ལས་སྦྱོར་གྱིས་དགྲ་བགེགས་ཚར་བཅད་དེ་གསང་སྔགས་ཀྱི་བསྟན་པ་འཛིན་པར་མཛད་དོ། །

ཡོངས་སུ་དག་པ་ནི། ཞྭ་ཡུལ་སྣང་བ་གཡུ་རྟིང་གི་ལྷ་མཁར་སྒྲོན་མ་དགུ་བརྩེགས་ཀྱི་ནང་ན་ཡབ་ལྷ་རབ་འོད་ཟེར་རྗེ་དང་། ཡུམ་ཕྱུ་ལྕམ་ཁྲི་ནེ་ཧིང་བཙུན་མ་གཉིས་ཀྱི་སྲས་སུ་གསང་འདུས་ཀྱིས་བྱིན་གྱིས་བརླབས་ཏེ་སྐུ་འཁྲུངས།

གནས་ནི་ཙ་གསུམ་མཚམ་རེ་ལྟ་འདུན་ཞེས་པ་དེར་ཡིན་པར་བཤད་དོ།། དེ་ལ་སྒྲག་ལ་མེ་འབར་གྱིས་དབང་བསྐུར་ཏེ་མཚན་ལྟ་བོན་ཡོངས་སུ་དག་པ་ཞེས་གསོལ་ཏོ། །འཆི་མེད་ཡུམ་སྲས་ཀྱིས་ཡུང་བསྟན་པ་ལྟར་ཁྱད་པར་གསང་འདུས་དང་སྒྲག་ལ་ལས་སྦྱི་སྒྲངས་མང་ལ་འཕེལ་བ་ཆུས་པ་ཉི་ཟེར་ལྟ་བུའི་བོན་གྱི་གཉེར་གཏད། གཤེན་གསང་བ་འདུས་པས་མན་ངག་མང་ལ་འཕེལ་བ་མཐིང་ཤོག་ལ་གསེར་གྱིས་ཕྲིས་ཏེ་ལྟ་གཤེན་ཡོངས་སུ་དག་པ་ལ་བསྟན། བསྒྲངས་པའི་གནས་མཚམ་རེ་ཟུར་གསུམ་དུ་བསྒྲངས་པས་གྲུབ་པ་ཐོབ། ལྟ་དང་ལྟ་མེན་གྱི་འཕྲུགས་པ་བཟློག་པ་ཕོགས་ཀྱིས་ལྟ་ཁམས་འདུལ་བའི་སྟོན་པར་གྱུར། །

རྒྱལ་གཤེན་མི་ཡུས་བསམ་ལེགས་ནི། མི་ཡུལ་དར་མ་ཁྲི་ཤོད་ཀྱི་རྒྱ་མཚར་ཁྲི་བཀྲད་ཙེ་འདུས་ཀྱི་ནང་དུ་ཡབ་མི་རྟེ་རྒྱལ་པོ་ཁྲི་བོད་དང་། ཡུམ་སྨན་ཟ་དུན་ཏིང་མ་གཉིས་ཀྱི་སྲས་སུ་འཕྲུངས། དེ་ལ་ཡོངས་སུ་དག་པས་ཚན་ལྟས་ནས་ལྟུང་སྟེ་མཚན་དུ་རྒྱལ་གཤེན་མི་ཡུས་བསམ་ལེགས་ཞེས་གསོལ། འཆི་མེད་ནམ་གསུམ་ཀྱིས་དབང་བསྐུར། སྒྲག་ལ་མེ་འབར་ཀྱིས་མཐུ་སྟོབས་ཀྱི་མངའ་གསོལ། རྨོར་གསུམ་ལས་དམར་ལ་འཕྲོལ་བ་ལུང་དོན་དཔེར་བཞག་གི་རྨོར་ཐམས་ཅད་སྒྲག་ལ་མེ་འབར་གྱིས་དུང་ཆོག་ལ་གཡུ་རིས་ཐིས་ནས་བར་མི་ཡུལ་དུ་རྒྱལ་རིགས་མི་ཡུས་བསམ་ལེགས་ལ་བརྒྱད་ཅེས་བཤད། འཕྲིང་གི་ངོན་གཉེར་དུ་གཏད་དེ་ཡུམ་ཚོད་ལྷམ་དོན་འབར་མ་ཐོགས་སུ་བསྟེན་ཏེ་བསྒྲངས། ལྟག་པར་མ་རྒྱུད་ས་ངས་རྒྱུད་གསུམ་གྱི་བོན་སྟེ་དག་བསྟན་ཏེ་རྒྱལ་མཁར་བ་ཚོད་དུ་བསྒྲངས་པས་རྒྱལ་ཁམས་ཀྱང་ཐར་པར་བཀོད་ཅེས་སོགས་མ་རྒྱུད་ལས་ཁོང་གི་རྣམ་ཐར་མང་ཙམ་གསལ། རྒྱལ་མཁར་བ་ཚོད་ཅེས་པའི་རྒྱལ་ཁམས་དེ་བོན་བཞིན་དུ་བསྒྲངས་ནས་ཕྱི་ནང་གསང་བཡང་གསང་དགྱེལ་འཁོར་གྱི་བཀོད་པ་མཇུག་དེ་གཏུལ་བྱ་དེ་དག་བོན་བཞིན་བསྒྲངས་པར་མཇུག་པའི་ཚུལ་མ་རྒྱུད་ཀྱི་ལྷོམ་འགྲེལ་ཉི་མའི་དགྱེལ་འཁོར་ལས་གསལ། །རྒྱལ་མཁར་བ་ཚོད་ནི་མི་ཡུལ་དུ་བཤད་ཀྱང་དེང་དུས་གང་དུ་ཡོད་པ་ངོས་མི་ཟིན་ནོ། །ཁོང་གིས་མི་ཡུལ་དར་མ་ཁྲི་ཤར་དུ་རན་ལ་འཚམས་པ་ཤིང་ཏ་རྣམ་པ་གསུམ་གྱི་ལྷོ་ནས་བསྒྲགས་ཏེ་བོན་ཀྱི་འཁོར་ལོ་བསྐོར་བའི་རྒྱལ་ཡང་བཤད་པ་ཡོད་དོ། །

ཀླུ་ཀླུབ་ཡེ་ཤེས་སྙིང་པོ་ནི། ཀླུ་ཡུལ་ན་ར་ཞེང་ཆེན་གྱི་ཟི་ཟི་ཏ་ཕུག་རིང་མོར་ཀླུ་མཁར་ལྷོན་པོ་གཡུ་ཆེའི་ནང་དུ་ཡབ་ཐུམ་ཟེ་ལྟ་ལྷོ་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་བ་དང་། ཡུམ་གཤན་ལྷམ་གཟི་ལྷན་མ་གཉིས་ལ་འཕྲལ་གཤེན་སྟང་ལྷན་ཀྱིས་ཉིན་ཀྱིས་བཟླས་པའི་སྲས་སུ་འཕྲུངས། དེ་ལ་མི་ཡུས་བསམ་ལེགས་ཀྱིས་ཀླུ་ལས་གྲུབ་པའི་ཡེ་ཤེས་སྙིང་པོ་ཞེས་མཚན་བཏགས། དེས་ཡུམ་སྲས་གཤེན་གསུམ་ལས་ཡུང་ནོད་དེ་དབང་བསྐུར་ཐོབ། གསང་བ་འདུས་པས་ཡུང་བསྟན་པ་ལྟར་དམར་ལ་ཟབ་པ་གསེར་ཞུན་ལྟ་བཅབ། ཉུང་ལ་འདུས་པའི་བོན་གཉེར་དུ་གཏད་དེ་ཀླུ་ཁམས་འདུལ་བའི་ཐུགས་པར་ཡུང་བསྟན། ཉུང་ལ་འདུས་པ་ངོ་སྤྲོད་གནས་ལུགས་ཀྱི་བོན་ནི་ཡུམ་བཟང་ཟ་ཤིང་བཙུན་ཀྱིས་གཡུ་ཡི་ཤོག་བུར་མཐིང་གི་ཞུན་མས་ཕྲིས་ནས་མཁྱོགས་པོ་ཀླུ་ཡི་ཡུལ་དུ་ཀླུ་སྒྲུབ་ཡེ་ཤེས་སྙིང་པོ་ལ་བསྟན་ཞེས་གསལ།དེས་གནས་ནི་ཆུ་མེག་བཀྲད་ཅུ་ཙ་གཉིས་ཀྱི་འགོ་བོར་བསྒྲངས་པས་ཐུབ་པ་ཐོབ་པར་བཤད་དོ། །

གཤེན་སྟང་བ་མདོག་ཅན་ནི། ལྟག་གཟིག་གི་རྒྱལ་པོ་དགུ་རྒྱལ་སྲས་ཆེའི་བཙུད་པར་འཕྲུངས། ལྟ་ཀླུ་མི་ཡི་གཤེན་གསུམ་བསྟེན་ནས་གསང་ལྷགས་ཀྱི་ལུང་ནོད་དེ་རི་རྒྱལ་ལྟུན་པོར་བསྒྲངས་པས་གསལ་ལྟ་ཁ་ཅིག་ཏུ་ཐུ་ཆུ་ཡི་ཀ་ཡང་ངོར་ལངས་ཏེ་བོད་དུ་རྒྱལ་གཤེན་བསྟན་པ་མཁན་ཆགས་མཇད་དོ། །རྒྱལ་པོ་གཤན་ཁྲིའི་བླ་མཆོད་ཡིན་པར་བཤད་པ་ཡོད་ལ། ཆུ་ཁྲི་དང་རྒྱལ་གཤེན་བསྟན་པ་མཁན་ཆགས་མཇད་པ་ནི་བོན་ཀྱི་དགེ་མང་པོ་ལས་གསལ་ལོ། ། དེ་ནས་ཆུ་ཁྲི་བཅད་པོ་ནས་གཏུང་བཙུད་བཅུ་གསུམ་དང་། མཁས་པ་མི་བཞི་བགྲང་བ་རེའུ་མིག་ཟུར་གསལ་ལྟར་

ཡིན་ཞིང་དེ་དག་རེ་རེའི་ལོ་རྒྱས་ནི་འདིར་མང་དུ་དཔྱིས་སོ། །མཁས་པ་མི་བཞི་ནས་བྱན་པ་ནམ་མཁའ་ལ་བརྒྱད་པའི་བར་ནི་བོད་ཡུགས་ཐུ་དར་གསང་ཐུགས་ཀྱི་བསྟན་པའི་རྒྱུད་རིམ་ཡིན་པས་ད་ལྟ་བོད་ཡུགས་གསང་ཐུགས་ཀྱི་དཔེ་གཞུང་མང་ཆེ་བའི་རྒྱུད་རིམ་འདིས་མཚོན་ནུས་སོ། །

བོད་ཀྱི་གསང་ཐུགས་རྒྱུད་རིམ་དུ་མཁས་པ་མི་བཞིས་བྱན་པ་ནམ་མཁའ་ལ་བརྒྱད་པའི་ཚུལ་གསལ་ཞིང་། བྱན་པ་ནམ་མཁའ་ནི་རིག་འཛིན་འདུས་པའི་དཔེ་ལས་གསལ་བ་ལྟར་ན། སྟོན་པ་གཤེན་རབ་ཀྱིས་ཁོང་གི་གསུང་གི་བསྟན་པའི་དུས་ཀྱིད་ཙམ་ལ་འཕྲུང་བར་ལུང་བསྟན་པ་ལྟར་བྱོན་ཏེ། ས་ག་གཟིག་དང་ཕྱ་ནུན་ནུ་དཀར་ནག་ཟ་ཏོར་བྱ་ཤ་དང་ཡུ་གུར་ཐོ་གར་ཞང་ཁོད་སོགས་སུ་རིག་འཛིན་མཐའ་ཡས་པ་ལ་བསྟེན་ཏེ་མཁས་པར་སྣང་ནས་ནས་ཡུལ་ཚན་དེ་དག་གི་ལོ་ཙྭ་བསྡུས། ནུ་གར་དུ་ཐམ་ཟེ་ཀུན་དགའ་བཟང་མཱའི་བུ་མོ་ཉི་མ་འོད་ལྡན་མ་ཕྱག་ནུར་བསྟེན་ཏེ་ཤུ་ལས་ཐུས་ཚེ་དབང་རིག་འཛིན་དང། བདླ་འཕྲུང་གནས་གཉིས་བཤད་པར་མཛད། ཚེ་དབང་རིག་འཛིན་ནི་ཁོད་ཡུལ་སོགས་གནས་བཤད་དུ་ཐུས་པའི་ཚུལ་ཀྱིས་འགྲོ་དོན་དཔག་ཏུ་མེད་པ་མཛད། བདླ་འཕྲུང་གནས་ཡུམ་དང་ལྷན་ནུ་གར་དུ་ཐོན་དུས་ཡུམ་ཀྱིས་དགོས་པའི་དབང་གིས་མེ་ཏོག་ཕྲེང་ས་ཐུ་ཁ་ཕྱེས་ནས་ཁ་ཅིག་ཀྱི་ནུལ་པོ་ཀུན་ཏུ་དགེ་ཞེས་པ་དང། ཡུམ་སྟང་མ་ཁོད་ལྟན་མ་གཉིས་ལ་ས་ལས་མེད་པར་ཐམ་ཟེས་ལུང་བསྟན་པ་ལྟར་མེ་ཏོག་གྲོང་དུ་ཀུ་འཛགས་པར་ཕེབས་དུས་མེ་ཏོག་གི་ཐོང་པོ་འགལ་བ་ལས་ཁྱེའུ་ཐུང་བ་རྣམ་དེ་ས་ས་ཀླས་ཏུ་ཐུས་ཏེ་ཡོད་པར། ཚོ་གསུམ་ལོན་པ་ན་འབངས་ཀྱི་བུ་ཚ་ལ་སོར་ཏོ་ཕོགས་ཏེ་བས་ཁད་པའི་ཉེས་པས་ཀུལ་ཁྲིམས་ངན་པ་ལ་ཚོགས་བཅད་པ་གླགས་མ་རྣེད་དེ་ཐོན་པའི་མཐར་ཡབ་ཡུམ་དང་མཇལ་ཏེ་གསང་ཐུགས་ཀྱི་ལུང་མང་དུ་ཞུས་ནས་གྲུབ་པ་ཐོབ། ཀུལ་ཁམས་མི་འདྲ་བ་ལ་ཚོགས་ནུ་ས་ཚོགས་ཅན་ཀྱི་དོན་ནུ་ཆེན་པོ་མཛད་པའི་ཚུལ་སོགས་རིག་འཛིན་འདུས་པའི་རྒྱུད་ལས་གསལ་ལོ། ཀེ་དག་གི་ཤོར་ཞིབ་ཏུ་བཏུག་ན་ཤུགས་གཞན་ནུ་གང་ཟག་གི་འདོད་ཆུལ་འཕགས་ཡུན་ཡིན་མེན་ལ་ཚོགས་ཡོད་ཕྱིད་ནའང། ཤུགས་འདིར་ཐུ་དར་གསང་ཐུགས་བརྒྱད་རིམ་ཀྱི་ཞིར་འཕྲོས་ཙམ་ནུ་ཐུང་བ་ཡིན་ནོ། །

ཟུར་གསལ་སྐྱབ་གནས་རེའུ་མིག་དང། བར་རིས་ཁག་ཅིག་བཅས་ཀྱིས་ཟུར་བརྒྱན་ཏེ་ཕྱི་ལོ་༢༠༠ལོར་ནུ་གར་ཧྲང་ག་ལའི་ལྷུལ་ཀླགས་ཅན་སྟན་ངག་མཁན་ཕེ་ཀོར་གཙུག་ལག་ཁང་ལ་ཕྱི་ཞི་གསང་ཐུགས་ཞིབ་འདྲུག་ཚོགས་འདྲའི་ཐོག་ཏུ་གཏམ་བཤད་སྟེལ་བའོ། །

CHARLES WILLEMEN

Abhişeka and the Chinese Hevajra Tantra

Etymologically sūtra means the weft of a cloth, and tantra is its wrap. Both are needed. Sūtras are the ideological guides and tantras give the actual practices, the rituals. The most important ritual is initiation, initiation being essential in esotericism. As it is well-known ever since Bu-ston (1290-1364) one commonly distinguishes four kinds of tantras: 1. Kriyā (action) tantras deal with external practices; e.g. snakebites, making rain, curing eye-diseases, etc... 2. Caryā (practice) tantras show equilibrium of external practice and inner yoga. Buddhahood may be reached after a long period accumulating moral and intellectual merit; e.g. Vairocnābhisambodhisūtra, early seventh century in Central India, Nālandā[1]. 3. Yogatantra: Upāya, means (practice) is joined with prajñā (wisdom). Vaoricana's three ways of acting are united with the individual's three ways of acting, within his lifetime.[2] 4. Anuttarayoga (Unsurpassed yoga) tantras, with e.g. the Guhyasamājatantra, early eighth century, and its Chinese translation by Dānapāla in 1002, and the Hevajratantra, end of the eighth century, with a Chinese translation by Dharampāla in 1054-1055[3].

During the final decades of the tenth century and the first of the eleventh century texts were written in the Song *Translation Bureau* in Bianliang (Kaifeng), and also printed there, in the Institute for the Propagation of the Doctrine *(Chuanfa Yuan)*. In 1071 the printings were brought to the Xiansheng Temple in Bianliang. The Japanese monk Chóchen was in Bianliang in 984 and sent the new texts to Japan. The Japanese Tendai monk Jójin did the same in 1073. However, it is not clear what happened to the texts. Did they arrive? Anyway, their influence on existing Shingon and Tendai was very limited. Also in China the song texts did not have a significant impact: In China esotericism, esoteric yoga was established in the eighth century, the most influential figure being Amoghavajra, teacher of Kūkai's teacher, Huigou. The situation in China had its own characteristics. S. Weinstein[4] has established that even in the

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1. Says Matsunaga, Y.: *Mikkyò Kyòten* Seiritsushi Ron, p.175. Lāta in the Kathiawar Peninsula, says Toganoo Sh., *Himitsu Bukkyóshi,* p.30, followed by many others. A. Wayman, *The Enlightenment of Vairocana,* pp.10-11, says: mid-sixth century, in Mahārāṣṭra.

2. E.g. *Tattvasamgrahatantra, Compendium of Truth,* end of seventh century in southern India, but completed end of the eighth century. Chinese versions by Vajrabodhi in 723, Amoghavajra, ca. 754, and Dānapālā in 1015.

3. T.XVIII 892

4. Weinstein 1987: 485

thirteenth century esotericism was called *yuqie (yaga) mizong* (esoteric lineage). He found this information in two Tendai chronicles: *Shimen Zhentong,* written during the Jiaxi era (1237-1240) of the southern Song by Zongjian[5]; Fozu Tongji of 1269[6], by Zhipan[7]. Here the name of Vajrabodhi (671-741), Amoghavajra (705-774), and Huilang, one of the six main disciples of Amoghavajra of Yogatantra. So, esotericism in China was seen as a yogic tradition, requiring initiation by a guru. Also Amoghajvajra's *Jingangding Jing Yuqie Shiba Hui Zhighui*[8], outlining eighteen yoga gatherings (fifteen in the Guhyasamāja) mentions (Anuttara) yoga texts. It is only Japan's Kūkai (774-835) (partially influenced by Huiguo?), who changed the emphasis to mantra, *shingon.* In Tibet the Hevajratantra was translated by 'Brog mi, mid-eleventh century. He taught it to the founder of the Sa-skya Monastery (1073). So, the Chinese and the Tibetan versions are very close in time. 'Phags pa (1235-1280), a most important figure in this lineage, was Qubilai's preceptor. The text was quite influential in Yuan China.

It was often said and written that the Chinese version is quite different from the Indian and the Tibetan versions. However, this does not mean that the Chinese version is faulty. I am convinced that the Chinese had to render the original Indian text adapting it to the Chinese environment, but in such a way that the message was understandable and correct for the initiated, for those who knew. Oral explanations were necessary in the Chinese version, a fine esoteric tradition. The Chinese text mentions four initiations, but never explains them one by one. One might even think just the first initiation is explained.

The First Initiation is called Ācāryābhiṣeka or Master Initiation, usually explained as an initiation to become a master. It now consists of five plus one part, i.e. water, crown, vajra, bell, and name, all accompanied by sprinkling rites. The First Initiation is known as the Jar (kalaśa) Initiation, because all parts include the use of a jar or jars. It is said that kriyā-texts had only water and crown, that caryā-texts had all five, and that yoga- and anuttarayoga- had five plus one, the Ācārya-Initiation, which gave its name to the complete set. The contents of these parts may have known an evolution too, but in the sixth part eight girls are made to enter the Mandala. The Chinese Hevajratrantra calls them vidyā, prajñā or yoginī, vidyārājñī. The Chinese text briefly explains the set of five (plus one) in Chapter Four, and also in Chapter Fifteen. In Chapter Fifteen the eight girls are called: wife, sister, daughter, niece, maternal uncle's wife, maternal aunt. The last two are phonetically rendered as four, although the Indian text has mother-in-law and paternal aunt as seven and eight. In this chapter the author refers to

5. Jap. *Shakumon Shótó* by Shūkan
6. Xianchun 5
7. T.XLIX 2035) (Jap. *Busso Tóki* by Shiban
8. T.XVIII 869

the Tattvasamgraha for a complete explanation of the Mandala ritual. The Second Initiation is called Secret (guhya). Here the ācārya as adamantine being, Vajrasattva, unites with a girl in menstruation. The essence of this great bliss, a drop of bodhicitta, Thought of Enlightenment, consisting of śukra, semen, i.e. upāya, and rakta, blood, i.e. prajñā is given to the disciple with thumb and fourth finger. The disciple may look at the mudrā, the yoginī. It may be expected that the preliminary practices are faithfully explained or, at least, clearly mentioned. The choice of the site, its protection, the Triple Refuge, the Four Immeasurables or Pure Abodes, the Fourfold Vajra, all these are mentioned in the Chinese text (Chapters Six and Seven). It is clear that the Second Initiation cannot openly be described in a text written by a religious official working for the Chinese government. Zhipan's *Fozu Tongji*[9] mentions that in 1017 a Vināyakasūtra was barred from inclusion in the Tripiṭaka, and that from that moment on it was forbidden to translate such texts. Anyway, it is hard to speak of esotericism if one informs the whole of East Asia. Furthermore, one must not forget that there already was an esoteric tradition in China. It already had its fundamental texts. It is the merit of Dharmapāla that he translated this explicit Indian text in such a way that those who know, understand the proceedings, e.g. Chapter Ten: Abhiṣeka, that talks about the relative bodhicitta, ṣukra (semen), without actually explaining what has happened. The same may be seen at the end of Chapter Twelve. When the text says: '...with thumb and fourth finger he explains how to understand the great symbol...' (Chapter Thirteen), the Second Initiation is meant, without clearly saying so. In Chapter Thirteen the Four Joys and Moments, experienced by the yogin, are explained. Adornment (vicitra) is the expedient explanation of various principles. Development (vipāka) is said to be nothing else but Perfect Joy (paramānanda), knowing blissful contact. Reflection (ālocana) is said to be nothing else but Joy of Cessation (viramānanda). Note that the common term vimarda, 'rubbing', is avoided. The absence of characteristics (vilakṣaṇa) is Simultanously-arisen Joy (sahajānanda), free from the three: passion, absence of passion, and a middle state. This passage in Chapter Thirteen talks about the guhyābhiṣeka, without explicitly saying so. The word 'semen' is never mentioned. Instead we see e.g. in Chapter Fourteen: "worldly bliss is like a *kunda*-flower (white jasmin) in the shadow of the white moon.' This is the explanation of the bodhicitta in its relative form. In Chapter Fifteen the yogin sprinkles camphor, i.e. śukra. This happens in the Second Abhiṣeka. It seems to me that the four stanzas at the end of the Chapter Fifteen can all be understood in the context of the Second Initiation.

'1. This quality (i.e. of being Hevajra) is neither of the three periods of time, nor of samsāra nor nirvāṇa. It is without self or other. It is perfect great bliss.

2.I f someone raises his hand, stretches his two fingers: thumb and fourth finger, and presses them together, the two are recompensed (i.e. lalanā and rasanā, prajñā and upāya, etc.). This is certain.

9. T.XLIX 2035, p.406a 1

3. If originally one does not have this characteristic (of being Hevajra), how could the though that one may have it arise? If later, when knowledge has arisen as if in a fools dream.

4. He relies on the void, the true end, since he is free from the desire in his most excellent end, he is called One with Knowledge of the Void (Hevajra).'

In the Third Inititiation (prajñājñāna), 'Knowledge Wisdom', the disciple unites with the mudrā practising seminal retention and promoting the bodhicitta in his body. The mudrā, a girl, is not even explicitly mentioned as a girl. She is referred to as a youth. The ignorant do not even understand a female youth is meant. She is helpful to realize the absolute Thought of Enlightenment, the great bliss. This is mentioned in Chapter Fourteen.

The Fourth Initiation is called caurtha, fourth. At the moment of the third one, the disciple experiences this fourth one. It arises simultaneously. Sahajānanda, the Simultaneously-arisen Joy, means the Fourth Initiation for the disciple, i.e. great bliss (mahāsukha). The Chinese Hevajratantra does not distinguish four mudrās (karma-, dharma-, samaya-, mahā-). It only mentions mudrā, yoginī, and mahāmudrā, mahāsukha of the yoginī.

The last chapter, Chapter Twenty, of the text is called Sahajārtha, 'The Meaningfulness of the Simulteanously-Arisen'. Here four stanzas refer to the four initiations. One is supposed to know that there are four initiations and also what happens in them. I quote:

'Then Vajragarbha Bodhisattva pronounced four gāthās on initiation:

1. Excellent it is, Oh adamantine ācārya, to see to it that all pupils are received, holding the great vajra and the great fine bell, and dwelling within the adamantine great Mandala!

2. Give them my secret initiation! Because they are initiated they hold the thought (of enlightenment). It is like the bodhi of a Buddha. Oh great leader, bring abut perfection for the sons of the endless true law!

3. Have pity! Have pity, oh Mahāsattva! Because of your great pity you are worshipped. You are skillful in innumerable forms, and you fulfill all wishes.

4. The adamantine circle is like the sky, free from impurity and essentially pure. It is called the gate to salvation of the friendly father. Concerning the great knowledge, few share in it!'

The text has the additional final stanzas, not found in either Tibetan or Sanskrit, warning against the danger of the ritual and praising its benefit when correctly understood.

As for the places of pilgrimage, which are visited by the yogin after initiation, these places are mentioned in Chapter Seven, but the Chinese text seems to adapt the contents to China. While the Indo-Tibetan versions have twelve places, the Chinese has ten, a number, which is associated with the ten stages of bodhisattvahood. The Chinese leaves out seven and eight of the Indian original. This seems to be the result of the Sanskrit *samāsenābhidhīyate,* 'called for short'. While eight places are located outside of China, in India, the last two may be anywhere; i.e. nine and ten: the places in which the congregation rejoices, or the ocean's shore. Ten (twelve): Groves with fine fruits and pure ponds. So, the Chinese differs from the Indian versions, but there always is a reason for these differences. Ignorance and inability alone are not satisfactory explanations. Cemeteries are nowhere explicitly mentioned as places for the ritual. When in Chapter Three, Stanza Four, the yogin should sit on a corpse, the Chinese phonetically says *mṇaka.* I cannot imagine that an ordinary Chinese intellectual understands such a word. It is equally true that, as one theory goes, the originally 'correct' translation was later cleansed and adapted. No Chinese scholar suspected the existence of such a word as *mṇaka.* When in the same chapter, Stanza Nineteen, we read: ... 'his (i.e. Hevajra's) second left arm then, and his second right hand (hold) the teaching prajñāpāramitā. She may have the appearance similar to the Buddha.'... , this passage mentions the female consort, the prajñā, and her appearance. To any ordinary reader, it would seem that Hevajra holds a book or a scroll (pustaka), not a consort. So, there is a reason for this so-called wrong translation.

I could give many more instances, showing that the so-called mistakes can always be explained. There always is a good reason for what seems to be a mistake. It is this phenomenon, which made me pay closer attention to the Four Initiations, especially the second and the third. The conclusion is that in the Chinese Hevajratantra the proceedings of the Four Initiations can be detected, only if one already knows what happens.

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DAVID TEMPLEMAN

Tāranātha and Indian Tantrik Knowledge in the 16th and 17th Centuries

INTRODUCTORY

This paper sets out to examine the wide variety of claims made by Tāranātha about his special relationship with the many Indian ascetics whom he met who claimed to transmit new and vital Buddhist teachings to him. It examines what Tāranātha believed he was receiving from these visitors and examines how he employed these new teachings strategically in the furtherance of his career.

Commencing in 1590, Tāranātha focussed much of his literary energy on creating an edifice which would make him a unique and attractive proposition to potential patrons. The result was what I consider to be a remarkable, if largely ignored work, the *bKa' babs bdun ldan,* (TARA1). The work sets out, in a quite novel fashion, what were considered to be the teaching lineages, which existed among Indian Buddhists between the 10th and 16th centuries.

Tāranātha set about achieving this goal by detailing, enlarging and contextualizing the lives of the various Indian masters whom he had encountered. To all intents and purposes, this process commenced with his 1590 meeting with the Indian Siddha Buddhaguptanātha who served as Tāranātha's major direct inspiration and source of data. The various hagiographies contained within the work included that of his master's own teacher, the Indian Mahāsiddha Śāntigupta who lived between approximately 1500 and 1600. Although Tāranātha never actually met Śāntigupta himself, he became the sole and ultimate authority on Indian Buddhism for him. It was this Indian Siddha himself who gave the young Tibetan the sense of authority which Tāranātha sought.

ŚĀNTIGUPTA...LAST OF THE INDIAN SIDDHAS

Our immediate interest in Śāntigupta arises primarily from Tāranātha's use of him as a means through which he could establish his own legitimacy and forge his own singular and unambiguously spectacular connection to India. In essence, Tāranātha was taught by an Indian siddha, Buddhaguptanātha, whose own master was the renowned Śāntigupta. This linked him directly with the very last of the Indian Mahāsiddhas. Much of Śāntigupta's special appeal to Tāranātha rested on his complex life and personality. The siddha was in fact all things to all people – at one and the same time a siddha, a politically powerful figure to a small but influential number

of rulers, and the leader of a group of devoted and committed disciples. All this occurred at a time when Buddhism was to all intents and purposes, well and truly defunct. It was partly through his adroit literary management of his relationship with the uniquely important person of Śāntigupta that Tāranātha was able to assure himself of new and powerful Tibetan patrons.

According to Tāranātha, Śāntigupta was the consummate siddha-master, the embodiment of the entire so-called 'Seven Lineages' of Buddhist Instruction said to have been handed down in India. He was also claimed by Tāranātha to have been India's very final great Buddhist master. However there does exist a contradictory view concerning Śāntigupta and the seven lineages of instruction, which he exemplified. From the comparatively sparse attention which the work TARA 1 (also referred to as 'The Seven Instruction Lineages') received in post-17th century Tibetan literary circles, I am of the opinion that there might have existed among Tibetans some doubts about its authenticity and his doubts have continued to be expressed as recently as 1990.[1]

1. Lama Choedak Thubten Yuthok for example, has noted Tāranātha's inconsistences in his works. He says of 'The Seven Instruction Lineages' that it ... 'is also a work reputed to have been written by Tāranātha, but I have some reservations regarding its authorship.' (Choedak p.11). In dealing with Tāranātha's apparent lack of awareness of the various initiatory names and chronologies for Virūpa for example, he is led to question the very authenticity of the text itself. He goes on to say of that work. 'The Seven Instruction Lineage, (*sic*) which is said to have been written by Tāranātha ten years before he wrote the 'History of Buddhism' (it was seven years – the author), then he should not be contradicting what he has already said in his earlier work. This means that the author of the 'Seven Instruction Lineages' may have been a work of a later *jo nang pa* (*sic*) scholar who forged Tāranātha's name.' (Choedak, p.30). I note that this view of Choedak is gainsaid by Tāranātha's own Autobiography (TARA 3) in which he says that when he was about 26 years of age in 1601, 'I commenced composing the *bKa' babs bdun gyi bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam thar*...' and does not mention the presence of a collaborator (TARA 3. p.155). As for it being a forgery, I am not open to this suggestion but favour rather the idea of the presence of a collaborator instead. Lama Choedak goes on to say, 'The Seven Instruction Lineages' . . . does not confirm all the traditions and lineages which have been the mainstream of Tibetan Buddhist traditions. The names of the Lineages neither distinguish between different classes of Tantra and their lineages (*sic*) nor does it explain why and how such lineages came into existence. It requires careful investigation.' (Choedak, p.30 fn. 76)

LATE INDIAN SIDDHA-HOOD

Because 'The Seven Instruction Lineages' forms the solitary basis of what we know about the enigmatic figure of Śāntigupta, apart from the seven Tantrik works attributed to him, this makes it a suspect source from the outset.[2]

Instead of accepting Śāntigupta simply as being a purely Buddhist siddha, the existence of whom we have absolutely no independent evidence whatsoever apart from Tāranātha we would be wiser rather to view him as being an exemplar of the more general *genre* of Indian asceticism, for which we have many well-documented examples from the period. Such an approach necessitates us avoiding reference to Śāntigupta in any way which suggests that he was an adherent of a clearly defined and isolated religious tradition, such as Buddhism, which might be imagined to have existed aloof and grandly self-sufficient in a world of competing and alien religious traditions. Moreover, if we are tempted to employ the word 'Buddhism' at all, we must be extremely careful to ascertain precisely what that term actually meant in that late period, if indeed the term had any meaning at all at that time. This paper will not only cast doubt on Buddhism's independent existence in India in the period under review, but

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2. Works said to have been written by Śāntigupta (A= Author; T=Translator)

1/ Kiṃcit smṛti. (= Hevajra piṇḍārtha kiṃcit) (*dGyes rdor gyi bsdus don cung zad*) = # 6
rg. lxxiv 32. 190b, 8 - 193b, 7.
A. Śāntigupta. T. Pūrṇavajra and rGyal khams pa Tāranātha

2/Buddhakapālatantra niṣpanna krama yoga saṃkṣepa (*dPal Sangs rgyas thod pa'i rgyud kyi rdzogs rim rnal 'byor*) = # 4.
rg. lxxiv 50. 222a, 7 - 225 a, 8.
A. Śāntigupta. T. Nirvāṇaśrī and Tāranātha /*Kun dga' snying po*

3/ Bhaṭṭāraka Śrī Mahākāla sādhana Saṃkṣipta upadeśa (*rJe btsun dpal Nag po chen po'i sgrub thabs man ngag mdor bsdus pa*)
rg. lxxxiii 32. 64b, 1 - 70b, 8
A. Śāntiguptapāda. T. Nirvāṇaśrī of Gauḍa in Eastern India, Pūrṇavajrapāda and Kun dga' snying po. (Tāranātha)

4/ Yoga saṃkṣepa (*rNal 'byor mdor bsdus pa.*) = # 2
rg. lxxiv 50. 222a, 7 - 225 a, 8
A. Śāntigupta, T. Nirvāṇaśrī and Tāranātha /Kun dga' snying po.

5/ Vajra sumārga (*rDo rje'i lam bzang po zhes bya ba*)
rg. lxxxvi 88. 208a, 8 - 214a, 3
A. Śāntigupta (abridged by Dīnākara), T. Buddhagupta(nātha) and Tāranātha

6/ Hevajra tantra rāja (= *Hevajra piṇḍārtha prakāśa*) (*dGyes pa rdo rje'i lus kyi don rab tu gsal ba zhes bya ba*)
rg. lxxiv 31. 176b, 5 - 190b, 8
A. Śāntigupta. T. Jo naṅ Tāranātha

7/ Hevajra piṇḍārtha kalpa (≠ Kiṃcit smṛti) = # 1
rg. lxxiv 32. 190b, 8 - 193b, 7
A. Śāntigupta, T. Pūrṇavajra and *rGyal khams pa* Tāranātha.

will suggest that any presumption of even the most marginal traces of Buddhism's existence in India after the year 1446, presupposes evidence which is not yet known in the scholarly world, despite Tāranātha's claims to the contrary. The year 1446 is the date of the final Buddhist Kālacakra manuscripts written in Arrah, Bihar, suggestive of an absolute terminus date.[3]

The *milieu* of itinerant siddhas among which Śāntigupta moved did not necessarily adhere to any single set of tenets, but rather opportunistically appropriated and utilized aspects of any religious tradition which they perceived as being of use to them. This of course is diametrically opposed to Tāranātha's narrative in which we note his version of India as a land in which a 'pure' Buddhism and 'pure' Buddhists still existed, albeit in a reduced form. He adhered to this view in spite of what he might have known from other sources, about the completely moribund state of patronage for Buddhism, the non-existence of an order of monks, the destruction of monasteries and even by implication, the complete waning of the doctrine.

THE SEVEN INSTRUCTION LINEAGE-A WORRISOME TEXT

Tāranātha distilled the new and often provocative data he received from Buddhaguptanātha, Pūrṇavajra and others into a cogent and novel structural form, that of the 'Seven Lineages of Spiritual Instruction' (TARA 1). These seven 'Inspirations' are said to be those of:

(1) Mahāmudrā

(2) Caṇḍikā

(3) Karma Mudrā

(4) Clear Light

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3. In 1446, near the modern town of Arrah, 65 kilometres southwest of Patna, a manuscript of the Kālacakratantra was created together with fine quality illuminated book covers, according to its colophon. (Pal. 1965) Whether these represent part of some sort of 'vestigial Buddhism' in which the creation of such icons, and perhaps attenuated rituals associated with it, brought talismanic rather than direct spiritual value is not known. We might suspect that the rituals for Kālacakra were well and truly defunct by that late stage in India, but this might not necessarily be the case. Indeed a possibility exists that such documents were created simply because the caste of scribes recalled how to do so. Rather like the way in which siddhas morphed one tradition into another, so the Kālacakra cycle was morphed into a wider artistic tradition about which we know almost nothing, except for the existence of the document itself. For a slightly earlier 1436 illuminated manuscript of Śāntideva's Bodhicaryāvatāra, copied in Bihār by a Thakkura known as Amitābha, see Pal (1988) p. 38

(5) Utpattikrāma

(6) The Oral Tradition

(7) Various Upadeśas

We should recall that Tāranātha wrote the text TARA1 in 1601, that is, only ten years after his encounter with Buddhaguptanātha. The work displays a thoughtful approach to what might appear *prima facie* as if it were a veritable disorganized barrage of information. Certainly such a structure is both innovative and complex.

However certain criticisms may be made of the work. Foremost is the problem of its sense of inclusivity, especially in the latter sections in which Tāranātha demonstrates little sense of discrimination in his adoption of the sub-hagiographies of all the students attached to Śāntigupta as if they were part of a 'genuine' Buddhist lineage. Implicit in this idea of a 'pure' Buddhist lineage is the belief that (a) there still existed at that late stage, 'Buddhist' teaching lineages, and (b) that Śāntigupta himself was in fact a 'Buddhist' with unimpeachable spiritual antecedents. Both of these are entirely undemonstrated assumptions.

Despite some of the detail in 'The Seven Instruction Lineages' being doubtful, either due to mis-information (or disinformation) on the part of Buddhaguptanātha, or even perhaps due to Tāranātha's errors in recording the material he was presented with, we still possess a precious account of considerable value.[4] Based upon the oral teachings he received, Tāranātha employed these seven core Indian teaching lineages as an hermeneutic device to codify the many lineages which he was told comprised the extant Indian Buddhist tradition at that time. According to the contemporary Tibetan scholar Dung dkar blo bzang 'phrin las (DUNGKAR1 (2002):174), these seven lineages of spiritual instruction derived ultimately from seven different renowned Masters, and we are told that this method of classification is a structural device evidently originally taught by Śāntigupta himself.[5]

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4. I do not wish to enter into a *resumé* of how and in which areas Tāranātha was in error in some of the basic historical and geographical assertions, which he adduces in an effort to add an aura of the genuine to the work. I simply note that Digby (nd) points out that there exist many examples in which the details are so absolutely wrong as to cast considerable doubt either upon Tāranātha's 'authoritative' sources or on his recall of what they had actually said. However on the more positive side, on balance it must also be noted that there is far more in the work which does in fact bear up to scrutiny and which demonstrates that Tāranātha's grasp of the complexity which constituted India was both insightful and detailed beyond expectation.

5. Locating the siddhas according to their major practice inspiration rather than via for example, a purely sequential *mode* or some other means of presentation was a relatively unusual method of classifying lineages, even in Tibet, although examples of this general *genre* might have existed in

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These precursors to Śāntigupta are linked to him by a series of masters in a sampradāya, or spiritual lineage, who reflect the type of heterodox and mixed groupings, which went to make up the religious mendicant tradition in India in the 16th century and before. Within the supposedly impeccable 'Buddhist' lineage of Śāntigupta we encounter figures such as Gorakṣanātha who clearly fall within the vaguer and more elastic confines of 'other' Indian ascetic traditions. Such ascetic figures have been adopted by Nāths, Śaivites and in Tāranātha's case, they were adopted by mendicants who, for their own purposes, sometimes called themselves Buddhists. As for several of Śāntigupta's 'awkward' predecessors, including Vyālipa, Mīnapa, Matsyendrapa, Caurańgipa and Gorakṣanātha, whose hagiographies are all recorded in TARA1, Tāranātha simply ignores such difficulties. These problems include for instance, Mīnapa hearing the tantras from Maheśvara and Umadevī directly, or the siddha Gorakṣa's clearly Śaivite past.

Despite their apparent dissonance, the existence of permeable religious lineages should pose no problem to us in our interpretation of such lives and certainly were not considered to constitute any sort of disjunction to the siddhas of India or to their Tibetan acolytes. This process of ongoing spiritual cross-fertilization among Indian mendicants of all traditions was a far more common feature of Indian religious life than has previously been imagined. The Tibetan concern (perhaps bordering on an obsession since the 12th-13th centuries) to assign a given siddha to a more or less exclusive and clearly defined grouping such as 'Buddhist,' 'Nāth' or 'Śaivite' is something which Indian mendicants themselves appear to have been far less concerned with. Indeed, the predominant feature of Indian mendicant life in this period was one of pure functionality. As observed by Professor Toni Huber, the prevailing mood was one which was, '...gregarious, multi-valent (and) maintained lots of teachings in circulation. Practitioners were interested in efficacy of their religious practice, and how what they did could be useful also to gain patronage at royal courts etc. The patrons sponsored or used mendicants

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earlier periods. As a result of these lineages, which sometimes appear to run in parallel rather than in sequence as one might expect, there exists a problem in the very structure of the work itself. This problem lies in the author's unwillingness to draw lines of connection horizontally across each instruction, between those siddhas who share teachings, which were spread across several instruction lineages. The various lineages themselves appear to be *prima facie* overly individuated and quite distinct from each other. This sense of there existing a mutual exclusivity of instructions in which a siddha appears as linked to just one teaching instruction and not in any others, was not at all the case in the Indian mendicant world, where the horizontal sharing of religious masters and teachings was both accepted and normal. In other words, siddhas belonged to several different instruction lineages rather than, as Tāranātha's structure suggests, just one. Nevertheless this seven-fold structure was a useful technique for Tāranātha to employ and through it he made sense of the welter of masters and disciples, which might have otherwise presented themselves as overly-chaotic in the very complexity of their lineages.

from all types of backgrounds regardless of identity labels; they too were interested in results (healing, life extension, gaining of power etc.)'[6]

THE DEMISE OF 'THE SEVEN INSTRUCTION LINEAGES'

For Tāranātha, the convergence of these seven lineages at a perfect point in the person of Śāntigupta was an ideal situation. Through the work itself and via his own role as the inheritor of that very lineage through the person of Śāntigupta's disciple Buddhaguptanātha, Tāranātha became a *de facto* member of their Indian spiritual inheritance. More importantly, he became a quite unique 'commodity' and therefore attractive to both patrons and other power brokers on the Tibetan side of the Himalayas. We do not know the extent to which Tāranātha received this transmission of the siddha hagiographies in its entirety directly from Buddhaguptanātha but what is clear is that Tāranātha used it for his own ends with great skill.

Despite this we can be certain that Tāranātha's unique literary work was not enthusiastically received by other Tibetan scholars, who although according it a measure of respect, ended up rarely if ever, quoting from it and never as far as I know, discussing its structure or veracity.

It is unclear exactly how influential this work, TARA1, was within Tāranātha's own lifetime. My own reading of Tāranātha's autobiography mentions no employment of it by his contemporaries as a teaching tool. Neither can I find any reference to the reception of the work in any of the ten autobiographies or biographies of other lamas who were Tāranātha's contemporaries, which I have read. I do note in a much later text, Sum pa mkhan po's *dPag bsam ljon bzang* (SUMPA) written in 1748, that the basic structure of the TARA1 is outlined and retained as being valid. However in Sum pa's work, Śāntigupta has been relegated to being a siddha of the 4th Lineage rather than the all-inclusive 7th where Tāranātha had located him. I suspect this 'demotion' of Śāntigupta is as much a result of political and sectarian 'point-scoring' as of anything else. It also tells us something of the sheer arbitrariness of the whole process of what constituted valid historical knowledge too![7] Towards the end of the cited passage in Sum pa's *dPag bsam ljong bzang* (SUMPA) there is an implied criticism of Tāranātha's creation of an apparently seamless edifice from what Sum pa considered to be incomplete and/or uncertain lineages. In this he was more than likely following the earlier criticisms of the Third Paṇchen Lama, Blo bzang dpal ldan ye shes (1739-1780) who used Tāranātha's work as a major source, especially for geographic details concerning India and

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6. Personal communication, August, 2006
7. Sum pa mkhan po's reconfiguration of the 7 Lineages are to be found in SUMPA. pp. 143 and 144. Sum pa mkhan po's criticism is on p. 146

beyond. However the Panchen did not for an instant believe that Tāranātha was in any manner of speaking, a full inheritor of the religious tradition he purported to be. I will refer to this criticism again somewhat later.[8]

We should not imagine that the work sank entirely without trace however. It should be noted that several apparently different recensions of Tāranātha's TARA1 were discovered within the collection of books in the recently discovered, sequestered personal library of the 5th Dalai Lama (1617-1682). The catalogue, 'BRAS SPUNGS, shows that several copies were likely to have been regularly used by the 5th Dalai Lama, suggesting that the work had not been ignored completely.

By extension we might surmise that they were probably also used by some other of the most important Tibetan thinkers of the time.[9]

One possible reason for the manner of the apparent demise of the TARA1 is that later in his own life the text came to be regarded by Tāranātha himself as being an immature work, one which reflected his aspirations to be an Indian through the verbatim acceptance of everything he was told at 16 years of age. Apart from the very few references to it, TARA1 seems to have disappeared without trace from Tāranātha's own stock of teaching resources. We do not even find him referring to it as a resource in his large Autobiography, TARA3. On this basis it would have been relatively easy for other Tibetan *savants* also to abandon it, perhaps because it contradicted their own understanding of the ways in which the teachings were transmitted or because it gave credence to siddhas whom these other lamas knew were not authentic lineage-holders. Whatever the reason, it failed to become the authoritative work which I believe that it merited.

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8. Despite the Paṇchen's mistrust of Tāranātha's claims, his writings were offered as prestigious gifts or used as exemplars from time to time. For example, the First Paṇchen Lama, Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1567-1662) offered a copy of TARA7, Tāranātha's 'Life of Padmasambhava Written in the Indian Style', the so called *Yid ches gsum ldan*, to Zhabs drung rin po che in about 1639. (PANCHEN1. p. 220) This is said to be the Indian version of Padmasambhava's *vita*. It was transmitted by Śāntigupta himself according to the text's colophon and presumably came to Tāranātha *via* Buddhaguptanātha. We read in the colophon of Tāranātha's work, 'Thus the account of this ācārya (Padmasambhava) derives from the oral tradition of Śāntigupta which in India is renowned, but exists in fragmentary form only...' (TARA 7, p 85. line 2)

9. These editions of the work may be noted in the Catalogue, 'BRAS SPUNGS under items: 016931; 017234; 017517; 017565)

'CERTAIN NEW TEACHINGS FROM INDIA.....'

Later in his life, even Tāranātha himself might have harboured certain suspicions, which were not evident to him during the first ten years after his first meeting with Buddhaguptanātha that is up to the year 1600. Some of the teachings, especially certain sādhanas, transmitted by Buddhaguptanātha to Tāranātha and recorded in the latter's 'Biography of Buddhaguptanātha', TARA2 (written in 1602) which were presented to him as 'authentic' Buddhist works, might well have appeared as suspicious to Tāranātha later on, as indeed might some of the details of the various lineages leading up to Śāntigupta. I make this suggestion because Tāranātha quite conspicuously does not refer to those siddhas or to their teachings in any substantial manner again following the year 1601. He appears to have entirely abandoned some of these sādhanas, which include the following which Tāranātha says had not made their appearance in Tibet previously and which therefore, he became sole proprietor of:

- The nineteen-deity evocation of Akṣobhya
- The Questions and Answers concerning the Six Instructions, (*bKa' babs drug ldan dri ba chen mo*)
- The Dohā songs and the pith teachings of Jālandhari
- The 'Shower of Wisdom'
- The 'Sole Lamp'
- The 'Sole Recall'
- 'Vajravārāhī Seated on a Corpse', according to Jālandharipa's teaching tradition
- The teachings on 'Vajravārāhī the Huntress'
- The teachings on 'Vajravārāhī of Variegated Hues'
- The teachings on 'Vajranairātmā in the form of a duck'
- 'Vajravārāhī the Chatterer'

The mere possession of the rare and precious Indian teachings such as Tāranātha received would have placed him in a position analogous to those pioneering and enterprising Tibetans who, up to the 13th century at least, had undertaken the arduous and dangerous journey to India in search of new and special Buddhist teachings. The main difference between them was that in Tāranātha's case, it was the teachings, which came directly (and less arduously) to him!

INDIAN SIDDHA STRATEGIES

Writing in his Autobiography TARA3 composed in 1634, Tāranātha recalls that when he was about 16 years of age in 1591, just after his meeting with Buddhaguptanātha, he met with a Buddhist yogi named Sanghaśrī who came from Trilińga in southern India and who was '...extremely learned in foreign systems of knowledge.' Tāranātha says that,

> I asked him very many questions on the pith essence teachings of the very highest Yāna. Sanghaśrī [or possibly Canagaśrī. Text reads 'Tsang ga shri'] and his un-named disciple (*dpon slob gnyis*) said that having visited Lhasa, they were both in a hurry to return to India again. Even though I wanted to ask them certain Dharma questions (somehow) I was unable to. One day they simply picked up their things, set out and swiftly departed. In the thirty-two days I spent with them I begged for much discourse, and through it many of my doubts were severed and the various branches of Dharma knowledge (*chos kyi yan lag*) which I had known previously were cut off at their source.... As for myself, I asked them about the coming to Tibet of any further non-Buddhist ācāryas and who they might be. They said that there would be insiders (Buddhists - *khong pa*) and also Tīrthikas (*mu stegs pa*) whose quality of mind would not be entirely suitable for me. They said that they knew nothing more at all.[10]

In his Autobiography, TARA3 Tāranātha records that on the 21st day of the 8th Hor month of 1596, he was visited again by the eastern Indian ācārya Nirvāṇśrī(pāda), a direct disciple of Buddhaguptanātha. Nirvāṇśrī(pāda) stayed with Tāranātha for one and a half months and explained the teachings which he himself had previously received from Buddhaguptanātha in an extremely detailed manner. We would be fully justified in assuming from this that these tantric teachings were in fact the very ones, which had not been given in their entirety to Tāranātha by Buddhaguptanātha. Yet, we encounter a major problem of interpretation here. The version of events written by Tāranātha in 1602 appears to contradict what he wrote in 1633. In his 'Biography of Buddhaguptanātha' written in 1602, when Tāranātha was 27 years of age, he notes that when he met the ācāryas Nirvāṇaśrī(pāda) and Pūrṇavajrapāda in 1596 they were not able to give him the teachings which he had not received from his Indian master because they themselves did not possess them. Possibly as a result of this inability, or due to their unwillingness to be placed in the invidious position of being asked for what they were unable to give, they left Tibet precipitously.

Patterns of behaviour such as feigned ignorance and sudden departure, as demonstrated by Buddhaguptanātha and these two siddhas, should have sounded alarm bells for Tāranātha.

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10. TARA3. p. 98, line 6 – p. 99, line 3

A more realist view might acknowledge the possibility that a repeatedly claimed inability to bestow teachings coupled with precipitous departures might have been part of a strategy adopted by Indian siddhas, purporting to be Buddhists, when they had reached a stage of being unable to carry the bluff off being authentic 'Buddhists' any longer. At its most basic, the strategy of retreat obviated the need to explain what one was unable to explain.

Can we construe from the contradiction in the documents that Tāranātha has failed to mention another undated visit from Nirvāṇaśrī(pāda) and Pūrṇavajrapāda during which he might have received the complete tantric teachings? Tāranātha's Autobiography is extremely detailed in matters such as the visits of Indians and precisely what they transmitted to him. For Tāranātha to have omitted such an important event from his ostensibly all-inclusive Autobiography seems unlikely. Instead of this rather contrived explanation which somehow does not ring true, I suggest instead, that 31 years after his initial (and entirely accurate) statement detailing the incomplete transmission as found in TARA2, the 'Biography of Buddhaguptanātha', Tāranātha had somehow revised his ideas about what had and what had not been transmitted to him. Perhaps this apparent revision of events is linked with Tāranātha's evolving view of himself, a matured self-vision as he wanted it to be presented in his Autobiography.

It seems possible that Tāranātha simply did not wish to appear to have possessed an incomplete Tantrik transmission or to admit to its incompleteness any longer in his later, impressive grand and politically motivated *vita*. The cost of such an admission, risked a loss of the reputation, which Tāranātha had so assiduously built up, and upon which so much depended and was far too great.

It would appear that other Tibetans might have noted this inconsistency too. Something of the doubts regarding the ramifications of this incident and the resulting incompleteness of the transmission, are reflected by the Third Paṇchen bla ma, Blo bzang dPal ldan ye shes (1738-1780) who observed the following:

> ... Buddhaguptanātha met Tāranātha at the Mahābodhi meditation site, and immediately he started bestowing various oral teachings upon him. All of a sudden, Buddhaguptanātha ceased giving them and said to Tāranātha that he had to return to India. At that time Jo nang sGrol mgon [Jo nang Tāranātha] who was feeling quite intensely about this, implored him to remain there in Tibet, but the master rebuked him saying, 'Because you possess a strong sense of dualistic thought, I am therefore unable to explain the various instructions to you!' As a result of this rebuke, rJe btsun Tāra[nātha] himself, while not receiving the Anuttara level empowerments of wisdom and reality, and although quite displeased, pretended as if he were pleased. In reality it was not actually so. rJe Phun tshogs gling pa [Tāranātha], with his partiality towards the teachings of Dol

[bu pa] said with displeasure that he was not at all satisfied with the core teachings of Nāgārjuna and his followers, so it would appear.[11]

In the above quote, we note that Tāranātha is accused of making false claims about whom he knew and how much he knew. Although doubtlessly respecting and utilizing both Tāranātha's historical and geographic knowledge in his 'An Outline of Shambhala' (PANCHEN3), it nevertheless appears that the Third Paṇchen bla ma had noted certain inconsistencies between Tāranātha's various versions of the account of his tantric inheritance. The capital, which the Paṇchen made of those inconsistencies, was doubtlessly related to the perceived incompleteness, and therefore the ultimate invalidity of the transmission itself. There is also a hint of sectarian point-scoring process at work in the Paṇchen's writing, which may be noted in the last lines of the quotation above. As part of this sectarian 'game,' the philosophical system of Dol bu pa is compared less than favourably to that of Nāgārjuna's which was fundamental to the Paṇchen's dGe lugs pa sect and Tāranātha is depicted questioning the validity of these core beliefs.[12]

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11. 3rd Paṇchen Lama, An Outline of Shambhala (PANCHEN3, p. 35. line 5 – p. 36. line 1). The text reads, '...*Sangs rgyas sbas pa'i mgon po de byang chen gyi dgon par Jo nang Tā ra nā tha dang mjal skabs thog mar chos 'ga' zhig gnang bar zhal gyis bzhes nas glo bur du ma gnang bar 'phags pa'i yul du phyir phebs pa'i zhal bkod mdzad/ de la Jo nang sgrol mgon pas nan tar bzhugs dgos par gsol ba btab pa'i tshe khyod rnam rtog shas che bas gdams ngag la la shod kyang mi btub par 'dug ces bka' bkyon tshul 'di Tā ra rje btsun pa rang nas mi gyo bla med kyi dbang gi skabs sher dbang dngos dbang du bskur ba bdag gir ma byas pa la ma mnyes pa yin khul mdzad 'dug kyang/ de kho na ma yin te rje Phun tshogs gling pa 'di pa dol zhen gyis klu sgrub yab sras kyi gzhung lugs la mi dgyes pa la ma mnyes pa'i gsung yin par snang ba/*

12. In much the same manner that Tāranātha implicitly believed what he was told by his various Indian informants, almost as if he had an *idée fixé* about the state of Buddhism in India, so too the erudite and scholarly bLo bzang dPal ldan ye shes, the Third Paṇchen bla ma (1738–1780) believed much of what Tāranātha had written. In a quite uncritical manner, believing what he read to be fact, he adopted, often word for word, much of what Tāranātha had previously said about the geography and sites of India and its environs, as well as the routes to such places, sometimes even embroidering Tāranātha's descriptions considerably. For example the Third Paṇchen Lama's description of Oḍḍiyāna appears to be an extension and at times a repetition, of Tāranātha's accounts found in TARA2, TARA3 and TARA4. However as has been noted, the Paṇchen was critical of Tāranātha for a variety of other aspects of his life. These include a certain sense of irritation felt by the Paṇchen towards Tāranātha for his apparent lack of concern at the problems raised by Buddhaguptanātha's precipitous departure from Tibet. The Paṇchen questions Tāranātha's eagerness to continue as a tantrik teacher without apparently having received all the requisite initiations, as well as Tāranātha's lack of insistence upon certain proprieties being fulfilled when meeting with Indian paṇdits.

The Paṇchen bla ma seems to be curiously selective in discriminating between what was worth describing and what was to be ignored. The power-site of Jhamigiri (which I believe to be Zanzibar)

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THE SIDDHA PŪRNAVAJRA AND 'NEW DOCTRINES FROM INDIA'

By the time of Tāranātha's birth in 1575, Tibetan Buddhism had not received any substantially new tantrik materials from India for several centuries. Strictly speaking, while Tibet was not

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for example, which had been such a seminal place for Tāranātha's guru, is almost completely ignored by the Paṇchen bla ma as a place of any consequence. (PANCHEN3. p. 30. lines 2-3.) However, when something took the Paṇchen's fancy, such as his interest in the contemporary status of Buddhism in north-east India, in particular the area of Devīkomma, the Paṇchen bla ma adds to Tāranātha's otherwise mild description of life there. For example using Tāranātha's description found in TARA7 as a basis, and adding the accounts which his own emissaries brought back to him, he creates a new and richer account. For example the Paṇchen writes, '(As for India)...for people such as Tibetans, generally speaking they find it hard to put up with such difficulties as the heat, the snakes, the various types of biting insects and harm from wild animals, all of which present them with endless difficulties which are hard to bear...(as well as) the Indians themselves who these days generally hold bitter sentiments towards the Tibetans whom they consider as filthy.' (PANCHEN3. p. 27. lines 4-6.)

The sheer quantity of Tāranātha's material which was employed by the Paṇchen bla ma in the creation of his *Shambhala'i lam yig* and the manner of its employment is of course, the topic of a separate study, for which this is not the appropriate place. Suffice it to say that it becomes clear that in effect, the Third Paṇchen perpetuated some of the mythologies of Buddhism's past and present in India, as well as over-valuing the accounts of the various routes to Shambhala which were said to have been frequented by both travellers and pilgrims. The Third Paṇchen's interest in India, in particular as found in his 1775 work, the *Shambhala'i lam yig* (PANCHEN3), appears to stem from two major reasons. Firstly, there was the necessity for him to appear as an unimpeachable expert on the route to the earthly Shambhala itself. As observed by Bernbaum, the Paṇchen bla ma felt that the journey to Shambhala of necessity had to be an arduous one, achievable only by tantric adepts. It was from this standpoint that he levelled criticism against an earlier guide to Shambhala by Man lung pa for whom Shambhala, by its very nature as a locus of ultimate liberation-possibility, had to be accessible by everybody, regardless of their status upon the tantrik path. (See Bernbaum (1985) pp. 38 and 241.) Like Tāranātha, the Paṇ chen never left Tibet, and for such a work as his to have succeeded and to have claimed for itself a valid soteriological function, it must have had the appearance of being based upon authentic travel accounts. Hence much of the description of the way to Shambhala itself is based in part upon Tāranātha's version of what he believed were Buddhaguptanātha's actual travels over certain parts of that route. This was as close to 'authentic and contemporary' as the PaG chen was able to get.

A second reason for the Paṇchen's interest in Shambhala is concerned with the nexus between Bodh Gāya and Shambhala itself. The traditional belief was (and still to an extent is) that Buddhism was said to have 'commenced' at the holy site of Bodh Gāya with the Buddha's achieving of Enlightenment there. This view of the focality of Bodh Gāya within the Buddhist world has been seriously questioned over the last 25 years. (see Huber 2008) It might accurately be said that the site serves a function more related to the centrality of its location in the land of Mādhyadeśa than to any accurate location for the event of the Buddha's Enlightenment. Following a cyclic pattern within the progress of

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in need of any such new infusions for either doctrinal or soteriological reasons, the possession of such purported new materials certainly added to the lustre and *puissance* of any new proprietor who could convincingly claim the authenticity of those materials. From what we know of Tāranātha and his ambitions up to his 30th year, I believe that we would be prudent to regard his claims to have been privy to such unique materials passed onto him by his master, Buddhaguptanātha in 1590 and Pūrnavajra in 1597, as a simply an unsubstantiated claim and little more. As for the texts themselves, they were in fact likely to have been confected by their promulgators. I suggest that this was simply a skillful means adopted by Indian Nāth yogis to enable them to gain a measure of support from Tibetans many of who were not in a position to know of their sometimes-spurious nature.

In 1597, Tāranātha again met with the Mahāpaṇdita Pūrṇavajra, the same person referred to above, who was the travelling companion of the ācārya Nirvāṇaśrīpāda. Both of these paṇdits had visited Tāranātha in the previous year. Pūrṇavajra, born in Western India, arrived at the retreat of Jo mo nang in gTsang along with his *coterie* of disciples. Tāranātha notes that he himself acted as their servant for a brief while before requesting them for further teachings. Tāranātha says that he wrote during every watch of the day on a text related to Cakrasamvara, presumably under their tutelage, and noted that his mind had become acute and fertile.[13] Pūrṇavajra must have been a person of some importance in his own right. We know this because during his visit no less an Eminence than the Third Yol mo sprul sku, bsTan 'dzin nor bu also came to hear him and together they became engaged in compiling a text dealing for the most part with the correct utterance of mantras.[14]

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Buddhism in India, Shambhala was said to have possessed a clear role, not only in Buddhism's historical past but also in its future in India. The next major event in the progress of the Dharma was said to be the re-establishment of Buddhist rule over India, a process said to emanate from Bodhgāya itself at an unspecified future time. This was said to occur after the Muslim invaders of India had suffered a series of climactic defeats by the final Buddhist King of Shambhala. The congruence of these cataclysmic events necessitated the locating the *Shambhala'i lam yig* substantially in India and the surrounding Buddhist world. Both the Third Paṇchen and Tāranātha regarded Buddhism as being in the process of re-establishing itself in India, and believed that it would remain thereafter at the very core of all past and future events connected with Buddhism. (This theme is discussed in Bernbaum (1985) chapter 3. section 4, 'Structural Parallels of Space and Time.') Tāranātha believed strongly that he possessed a role in what he believed to be this Indian Buddhist renaissance, not only in the immediate re-kindling of the flame in the Vindhya Hills, but in the long-term, as an enlightened Buddha in India working throughout future time. On Tāranātha's future incarnation as a Buddha, see TARA4. pp. 679-681.

13. I am aware that this is a highly inflammatory and debatable area of some considerable concern to lineage integrity. Nevertheless I believe that it should be raised if only to allow further discussion.

14. TARA 3. p. 123, line 1

However, a far more important point than the *bona fides* of Pūrṇavajra concerns what Tāranātha believed he was actually instructing him in. In general terms, as if establishing his singular value, Tāranātha commences by saying,

> ...I believe that I had extraordinary good fortune in being the [only?] person in this part of the world (*phyogs 'dir*) who was able to draw on the essence-knowledge (*thugs bcud*) from all the Indian learned scholars. I believe that right from the outset, I have gained all the extraordinary secret teachings whose completely true meaning has adhered to me and flourished...[15]

This spells out quite clearly what a major part of Tāranātha's unique agenda actually was. As the sole possessor of the authentic and the very latest tantrik technologies, heard directly from the mouths of Indians whom he regarded as being amongst the very last of the Indian siddhas, he had become unique and therefore more 'marketable.' By implication, his position as the holder of these instruction lineages, their 'sole proprietor' so to speak, was therefore unassailable. The sticking point of just how unique these teachings actually were remains unsatisfactorily studied, but I make some suggestions on what they might have comprised below.

As for the changed state of certain of the Buddhist teachings which he received, Tāranātha may or may not be entirely accurate when he records a description of them as '...new doctrines which have arisen in India...'[16] This phrase, discussed in greater detail below, clearly suggests that there had been certain doctrinal (or ritual) developments in India which had occurred after the period when most Tibetan understandings of Buddhist practice had been more or less completely formed, that is in the 14 -15th centuries, one of the peak periods of Tibetan creativity.

For a variety of reasons I do not set much value upon Tāranātha's view that somehow certain Buddhist doctrines had developed new dimensions, especially because the corollary of such a view was that it was he alone who was privy to those modifications. I find it quite improbable that Buddhism in India had developed in any significant manner since the 12th century. Rather, I suggest that what Tāranātha was in fact taught was an adventitiously cobbled

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15. TARA 3. p. 123. line 2

16. TARA 3. p. 123. lines 1-3. The important section reads ''*phags yul mkhas grub kyi thugs bcud phyogs 'dir nged rang gi thun mong ma yin pa'i legs bshad nges don gyi gsang tshig 'gos che ba brtsams pa'i thog ma yin/* ' Much the same sentiment is expressed by Tāranātha in his Secret Autobiographies where he says that he has gained a little secret knowledge from the various Indian and Tibetan *siddhas* who have befriended him. (TARA 4. p. 690. line 5.) The text reads, ' / *grub thob rgya bod du byon pa phal che ba dang rtag tu 'grogs pa snyam byed pa dang/ lkog gyur cung zad shes pa rnams gdog/ dus rtag tu rkyen gang byung yang/ chos kyi snang ba dang...../*'

together mixture of possibly Buddhist tantrik instructions 'recalled' by Indian yogis belonging to the Nāth tradition. This 'Buddhist patchwork' was combined with other material, which was taken from the Nāth yogic instructional *corpus*. These yogis were very unlikely to have been Buddhists in any manner that Tāranātha might have accepted, but might have appeared in the form of the same type of ascetic as the Indian Buddhist Mahāsiddhas of several hundred years earlier, whose typology Tāranātha would have been extremely familiar with. I believe that the mixing together of religious 'bits and pieces,' certainly a hallmark of the adventurous spirit at play among Indian ascetics, had become one of the key aspects of the ministrations of these very last Indian siddhas who claimed some sort of Buddhism as their own tradition. Tāranātha ultimately accepted what he believed were the latest tantrik truths from India because his master Buddhaguptanātha had authenticated them through his own life history and personal charisma.

Certainly this *mélange* appears to have been convincing enough to draw the young and inexperienced Tāranātha into its web. As mentioned in a previous chapter, and reiterated here, it is only between the years 1598 and 1605, that is between his 23rd and his 30th years, that we find Tāranātha writing extensively about this topic of the 'new' Indian doctrines, and proclaiming the various teachings and the new and exciting accounts of Indian Buddhist lineages. It is noticeable that thereafter, for the most part but not exclusively, his writings deal with more traditional approaches to Buddhist practice and are less concerned with those '… new doctrines, which have arisen in India' which had interested him so profoundly in his youth. It appears almost as if, after his 30th year, he had seen through much of their adventitiousness, by which time he was already well accepted and respected by his patrons, the gTsang sDe pa.

'NEW DOCTRINES' AS A TOOL TOWARDS LEGITIMACY

Unfortunately, having referred to them as 'new (Tantrik) doctrines,' Tāranātha is not particularly forthcoming about the details of these developments other than to note how difficult they were for him to finally understand. Tāranātha records an account, which reflects upon the understanding the nature of some of those new Indian teachings and their use towards legitimation.[17] In 1603 s'Tag lung rin po che re requested that Tāranātha write *sa bcad* explanations of some of the new materials which he had received from India. Tāranātha says that he did nothing about it for a considerable time due to his innate laziness and the pressure of his ritual requirements.

17. TARA 3. p 124. line 6

Only long after the initial request did he finally manage to write the explanatory texts.[18] It appears that in these circumstances he describes, Tāranātha might well have been attempting to create something of a 'niche market' for himself by maintaining some control over their dissemination, despite his protestations of his inherently lazy nature and his overwork to the contrary. However for the purposes of this paper the important point worthy of note is that sTag lung Rin po che's request demonstrates there was nobody else with Tāranātha's specific 'Indian knowledge' who was able to explicate those new materials. This proprietorial control over such works added further to Tāranātha's power and charisma and made him a far more desirable commodity for his own, and possibly other, patrons.

NEW VISIONS FROM INDIA

In about 1603/4, after his second meeting with the paṇdits Pūrṇānanda and Premānanda, Tāranātha says that he was staying at bKra shis rtse near sNar thang monastery with his parents, when a certain India yogi named Satyanātha / Sāgaranātha came into the presence of the local Chief. We are further informed that this yogi possessed certain other works on the goddess Tārā which '...were newly arrived from India, ... and which had been freshly translated....'[19] In the subsequent discussions between Tāranātha and the yogi, the Indian told him that he himself had paid large scale homage to the so-called 'Water-spout Tārā' image at Vajrāsana[20] and also to the Maitreya image there, as well as large-scale public ceremonies at the site of the Mahābodhi itself.[21] Tāranātha tells us that among the many practices which

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18. Shortly after the visit of the two Bengalis Pūrṇavajra and Nirvāṇaśrīpāda discussed above, various others visited him. Among these was His Eminence, the Holy Śrī Guru Mahāvajrāsanapa Śrī Dharmabhadra whom Tāranātha met at bSam sdings monastery. In collaboration with him, Tāranātha created a powdered gem maṇdala for Śrī Kālacakra, a great maṇala for Vajrapāṇī, learned the dhāraṇis for the Fivefold deities of Ghaṇṭapā *(Drilbu lha lnga)* and the Kāyamaṇdala for Ghaṇṭpā, for all of which he was given the requisite empowerments. (TARA3. p.127. Line 5)

19. The text reads, *'...sTag lung nas skyabs gnas dam pa'i bka' las / 'phags yul nas byung ba'i chos gsar ba 'di rnams rgya gzhung kun lag tu longs dka' bar 'dug pas thams cad la yig cha gsal ba re byed dgos bka' stsal pa ltar 'phral du byed 'dod tsam yod na'ang le los rgyu byas brel ba dang kha 'don sogs kyi stabs nas cher ma grub/ yos lo'i nang du dran bskul gyi phyir sa bcad tsam re bris/ '* (TARA 3. p. 124. lines 6-7)

20. Templeman (1995) pp. 11-12, tells us about this miraculous image. However Tāranātha's accounts are so similar to those of Chag lo tsā ba who travelled in India between 1234 and 1236/7 that we cannot discount them as being his primary source. See Roerich (1959) p.75 and CHAG between pages 46, line 12 and 47, line 6. It is possible that Tāranātha employed these new accounts elsewhere other than in TARA5. However, I am unaware of them at present.

21. TARA 3. p.196. line 6 ff

both he and those present with him at bKra shis rtse were empowered into, was a new cycle of texts dealing with the goddess Tārā. He notes that shortly thereafter he became empowered to commence writing his own account of the goddess Tārā[22] concerning which, he notes that he had been unable to work on previously at the relatively early age of 16-17 years of age.[23] A brief perusal of Tāranātha's 1605 work TARA5 ('The Origin of the Tārā Tantra') shows clearly through their genetic linking that Tāranātha had adopted a series of explanatory accounts of Tārā's miraculous manifestations in Mādhyadeśa given by Buddhaguptanātha and Satyanātha as well as other, older sources such as the accounts of the 13th century Tibetan pilgrim, Chag lo tsā ba.

There seem to be three explanations, which might assist in our understanding of these late developments in the corpus of texts surrounding Tārā.

- The yogis brought with them various long-forgotten materials, which indeed had emerged several centuries after the main corpus of texts concerning Tārā had already been brought to Tibet.
- They had gathered together certain new stories and sādhanas which had been newly created as part of the last stages of worship of the goddess in India.
- The new accounts had been created and introduced as a means through which yogis and siddhas might gain credibility (and therefore support) in the Land of Snows. Perhaps the Tārā *cultus* was the speciality of this particular yogī alone, or perhaps they comprised the general stock-in-trade of other such mendicants.

Whatever the case, Tāranātha shaped those accounts into the cornerstone of his own 'speciality' texts on Tārā for which he subsequently became renowned.

In his studies of Buddhism in India, Tāranātha may never have considered the degree to which a sense of syncreticism had influenced the various Indian religious traditions. Neither had he realized that Buddhism had become inextricably included in this mix. This process of development and in some cases fusion must be regarded as part of a process of continual development rather than one of degeneration and atrophy as the British historians of Buddhism viewed these later (Tantrik) stages of Buddhism's history. It has been stated above that yogis in India could in fact be all things to all men. When required they could (and did) act as brāhmans, as Vedic experts and sometimes even as Buddhists! Their particular modes of activity and the various spiritual *persona* they adopted appear to have depended largely upon what their patrons regarded (and demanded) as being of prime importance to them. This does

22. TARA 3. p.206. line 1
23. TARA3. p. 90. L 6. He says simply, 'At this time I was unable to translate the great Tārā Tantra.'

not intend to detract from their evidently highly developed skills as priests, ritualists, meditators, pilgrims, elucidators of doctrines and sometimes, when necessary, as downright charlatans.[24]

I have suggested in this paper that the young Tāranātha who met these Indian ascetics was unable to clearly distinguish what was genuine and what was 'professional padding.' From there I have demonstrated that Tāranātha appears to have realized this some ten years afterwards and that he avoided almost all further reference to the visiting siddhas or their teachings thereafter. However, at 59 years of age and almost at the very end of his life, Tāranātha once again wrote about and reviewed these early meetings and transmissions in his final major work, his grand Autobiography. I take the point that his purpose in this was not some sort of 'nostalgically rearward-looking' review of those incidents. Instead I suggest that he was in fact, revitalizing the importance of those earlier youthful meetings and tantric teachings to ensure the vitality and ongoing patronage of the lineage of the Jo nang tradition, of which he was the pre-eminent figure. The purpose of this literary review of his past was to remind his patron, the sDe pa of gTsang Ka rma bstan skyong (1606-1642) of his unique value, something which had perceived by his grandfather in Tāranātha's youth. In that highly uncertain period of Tibet's Civil War, just before the ultimate demise of Tāranātha's staunch patron in 1642, the literary re-creation of his past was Tāranātha's attempt to perpetuate his lineage in those extremely troubled times.

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24. Aris (1988) provides a clear example from Bhutan of his intriguing combination of a wide variety of character and role traits, as embodied in one person, namely Pad ma gLing pa (1450-1520). See Aris (1988) pages 64-66 for a description of the battles for spiritual 'authenticity' between Pasdma gLing pa and Lama Nsam mkha' in 1479 and 1485.

Appendix.

TABLE OF INDIAN VISITORS WHOM TĀRANĀTHA MET BETWEEN 1576 AND 1631.

Visitor's Date	Visitor's Name/ Location	Source	Date/Author of Source
1576	Five Indian ācāryas	TARA3	1633 Tāranātha
1577	Several Indian ascetics	TARA3	1633 Tāranātha
Mid-1577	Several Indian ācārya.	TARA3	1633 Tāranātha
Before 1582	Solitary Indian yogin	TARA3TARA9	1633 Tāranātha 1639 or 1651 (?) Tshe bstan (sic!) dar rgyas
1590	Buddhaguptanātha. (South India)	TARA4 (part 1) TARA2 TARA3 TARA9 PANCHEN3	1599 Tāranātha 1602 Tāranātha 1633 Tāranātha 1639 or 1651 (?) Tshe bstan (sic!)dar rgyas 1775 3rd Panchen
1591	Sanghaśrī. (South India)	TARA3	1633 Tāranātha
1596	Nirvāṇaśrīpāda. (Eastern India)	TARA3 PANCHEN3	1633 Tāranātha 1775 3rd Panchen
Late 1596	Pūrṇānanda and Premānanda.(Bengal)	TARA3 PANCHEN3	1633 Tāranātha 1775 3rd Panchen
1597	Purṇavajra.(Western India)	TARA3	1633 Tāranātha
Between 1597 and 1600	Mahāvajrāsanapa Śrī . Dharmabhadra	TARA3	1633 Tāranātha
1601	Dharbeśa	TARA3	1633 Tāranātha
1603	Pūrṇānanda and Premānanda. (Bengal)	TARA3 PANCHEN3	1633 Tāranātha 1775 3rd Panchen
After 1603/4	Satyanātha / Sāgaranātha	TARA3	1633 Tāranātha
Before 1615	Bha da (?) (South India)	TARA3	1633 Tāranātha
1624	Two un-named male and female yogis. (Disciples of Buddhaguptanātha)	TARA3	1633 Tāranātha
1624	Kṛṣṇābhaṭṭa.(Vāranasī)	TARA3 TARA8	1633 Tāranātha 1624 Tāranātha
1630-31	Bālabhadra. (Western India)	TARA3 TARA8	1633 Tāranātha 1624 Tāranātha
Date not mentioned. (Possibly 1585/6, 1601 or 1612.)	Pājjavarti/Sājjavarti	TARA4 (part 1)	1599 Tāranātha

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SHEDUP TENZIN

The Non-apprehension (*'dzin med*) of Luminosity and Emptiness: A Lam 'bras View of Sakya Tradition

The Sakya Tradition is one of the four major schools of Tibetan Buddhism founded by Khon Konchok Gyalpo in the eleventh century AD and propagated by the five founding masters of the Sakya sect popularly known as *gong ma lnga*. Through the efforts of these masters, the great deal of Sutras and Tantrik teachings of Indian Buddhism were assimilated into the spiritual life of Tibetan masters. One of the most famous teachings among these is Hevajra Tantra, whose transmission originated with the Indian Mahāsiddha Virūpa and had been brought to Tibet by the Yogin Gayadhāra, the teacher of Drogmi Lotsawa, who then passed the transmission to Sachen Kunga Nyingpo (1092-1158, one of the five founding masters of Sakya tradition). Many masters of the Sakya tradition have successfully preserved the lineage to this day.

The fundamental and unique teaching of Sakya School is known as *Lam 'bras* (the Path and its Fruit) which is rooted in Hevajra Tantra.

Lam 'bras is highly regard as one of the most important and precious literatures of Sakya tradition which generally deals with the esoteric teachings of Mahānuttara-yoga-tantra and Hevajra Tantra. The *Lam 'bras* texts are meditational manuals used by monks and lay practitioners of the Sakya tradition.

It was only in 13th century when the practice of carving of xylographic blocks was introduced in Tibet, that the selected works on *Lam 'bras* were compiled in the collected works of the five founding masters of Sakya (*sa skya gon ma lnga*).

The philosophical view of 'Ultimate Reality' as expounded in the Sakya School is the view of 'Non-apprehension of Luminosity and Emptiness' (*gsal stong 'dzin med*) or 'Inseparability of Samsara and Nirvana' (*'khor 'das dbyer med*). It is the view of *Lam 'bras* teaching and this technical term is exclusively employed in the Sakya school of Tibetan Buddhism.

The view of 'Non-apprehension of Luminosity and Emptiness' may be interpreted from the viewpoint of the sutra tradition and the Tantrik tradition. And the Sūtra tradition can be

further interpreted in accordance with the instruction of Nāgārjuna and the instruction of Maitreya Nāth (*byams pa mgon po*) as the basis of this view.

With regard to the instruction as propounded by Nāgārjuna, there are two steps to follow in order to eliminate all the wrong views or misconceptions towards the existence. They are 'cutting off the extreme that is grasping at the true existence' (*bden 'dzin gyi spros pa gcod pa*) and 'cutting off the extreme that grasping at the lack of true existence' (*bden med kyi spros pa gcod pa*).

CUTTING OFF THE EXTREME THAT IS GRASPING AT THE TRUE EXISTENCE

In this first step, the method of 'cutting off the extreme that is grasping at the true existence' is explained as follows. Initially one tries to identify the grasping at the true existence of 'the true existence of five aggregates' (*phung po lnga*) within one's own continuum. Once one has identified as such, one tends to think that such five aggregates must exist from the beginning without depending upon any causes and conditions. But in reality these five aggregates are produced from its causes and conditions. Therefore one comes to the conclusion that it lacks true existence. Having contemplated on this, one cuts off the misconception of grasping at the true existence. By cutting off the misconception of grasping at the true existence, one should let one's mind completely relax on the 'identification of the conception of the lack of true existence'. By following this process, the thought that was bound by the misconception of grasping at the true existence will naturally loosen or disappear by its own accord, in the same way as the snake naturally loosens its own tied body. At that moment one will come to realize that all the phenomena equally 'lack the true existence' (emptiness). As Ārya Deva ('Phags pa lha) said, 'What ever is the emptiness of one (phenomenon), that is the emptiness of all (other phenomena)' *(gcig gi stong nyid gang yin pa// de ni kun gyi stong nyid yin//)*.

It is said that generally there are those who have already attained the śamatha (*zhi gnas*) and those that have not attained śamatha before realizing the view that all phenomena lack true existence, i.e. the view of emptiness. In the case of first one, the moment (s)he realized the view that all phenomena lack true existence, (s)he generates the view of 'coalescence of śamatha *and vipaśyanā'* (vipassana) (*zhi lhag zung 'brel gyi lta ba*) within her/himself. With respect to the second person, (s)he will able to accomplish the śamatha followed by the realization of the view of emptiness and thereby eventually generate the view of coalescence of śamatha and vipaśyanā within her/himself.

CUTTING OFF THE EXTREME THAT IS GRASPING AT THE LACK OF TRUE EXISTENCE

Karma and conflicting emotions arise from the misconception of grasping at the true existence. This very misconception has arisen from the apprehension of characteristics (*mtshan 'dzin*). Therefore this has to be completely cut off. Hence, having empirically established that all the phenomena lack the true existence, one should also at the same times cut off or drop the state or extreme view that all phenomena lack true existence. One should induce certainty in the view of realizing that all phenomena lack true existence by the fact of dependent origination; and having gained certainty over this view, one should not hold on to it continuously, rather one should leave (cut off the grasping at the lack of true existence. Since emptiness is not an object of experience of dualistic thought, it has to be apprehended neither as eternalism nor as nihilism. Having thus determined, one should relax or leave one's mind on the view of non-apprehension, which is not contaminated by apprehension, characteristics and all the extremes of the object. Hence, it is said that, 'If grasping arises, you do not have the view' (*'dzin pa byung na lta ba min*). So grasping (*'dzin pa*) in this case refers to the grasping of true existence (*bden 'dzin*) and the grasping of characteristics (*mtshan 'dzin*) as well.

With respect to the method of Maitreya, one has to initially identify the fact that the 'pristine mind by nature clear light' is right from the beginning the basis of both Samsāra and Nirvāṇa. Since the innate ignorance that is our dualistic appearances (manifest or dormant state) of 'apprehended object' (external object, *gzung ba*) and 'apprehender' (subjective mind, *'dzin pa*) is the root cause of Samsāra, it should be uprooted and merge into the sphere of reality (emptiness). There are two steps for this practice namely 'cutting off the illusion of apprehended object' (*gzung ba'i 'khrul snang bcad pa*) and 'cutting off the illusion of apprehender' (*'dzin pa'i 'khrul snang bcad pa*).

CUTTING OFF THE ILLUSION OF APPREHENDED OBJECTS

That we are not able to perceive the basic pristine mind, which is free from dualism and naturally clear light, clarity and non-conceptualism, is due to the fact that our basic pristine mind is completely obstructed by misconception. The misconception is due to grasping, external objects exist as a separate entity from the subjective mind. Therefore, this obstructer (*sgrib byed*) must be eliminated. The *modus operandi* of elimination of this is to endeavor as much till one empirically experiences that there is nothing that exists truly apart from the subjective

mind. Having persevered through this process, eventually there arises a slight clear appearance (*gsal snang*) of ascertainment within oneself on the point of view that these external objects of appearance are nothing other than mere illusion of one's own mind.

Further, practising on this point over and over again increases the intensity of clarity of mind. At this moment, the clarity of experience becomes clearer than the previous one. Subsequently the constant strenuous effort purifies the 'manifest illusion' (*'khrul snang mngon 'gyur ba*) of 'apprehended objects' that obstruct the clear light of one's own mental continuum. Thereby arises the state of clarity and bliss more intensely in one's mind than the preceding clarity and joy.

At this stage, though the illusion of one's inner subjective mind or the apprehender have not disappeared, the illusion of apprehended objects has completely disappeared and there does not arise any grasping at the truth towards the appearance of external objects.

CUTTING OFF THE ILLUSION OF APPREHENDER

Having continuously put in effort, one will attain the stage where even the illusion of an apprehender or the inner subjective mind will disappear and there will arise experiences as if one directly perceives the intensity of the luminosity of one's own mind. Though at this stage the innate ignorance is yet to be purified, most of the manifest illusion of the apprehended object and the apprehender, which springs out from the innate ignorance were purified and radiate the clear light of its purity. This causes the immediate attainment of the exalted wisdom of the first level of 'The Path of Sceing' (*mthong lam*) without any hindrances. By further engagement in the practice of meditation, one purifies both the dormant state and the manifest state of innate ignorance, which is the basis of dualistic thought. As a result, one generates within oneself the clarity and exalted wisdom as if one directly perceives the luminosity of mind that is free from dualism. Followed by constant meditational practice, one sees the part of luminosity of one's mind after purifying a partial seed of innate ignorance. At this stage, one has attained the first level of 'The Path of Seeing'. Subsequently during each of the ten levels, the intensity of clarity will increase gradually by purifying each part of obscuration ignorance, which obscures the luminosity of mind; eventually one attains complete Buddhahood at the eleventh level; then one will see the true nature of mind that is free from two delusions without any obscurations.

THE VIEW OF NON-APPREHENSION OF LUMINOSITY AND EMPTINESS WITH REGARD TO TANTRIK TRADITION

The view of non-apprehension of luminosity and emptiness within the tradition of Tantra as expounded and practiced by the Sakya masters refer to the view that realizes the ultimate nature of mind or the view of emptiness. In order to experience this view, one has to initially identify or search for the true nature of mind. It should be identified as the coalescence of luminosity and emptiness and the primordial innate wisdom of one's mind and this should be recognized with pinpoint accuracy. Hence meditating on this constantly, whatever appears to one's mind appears to be the manifestation of primordial wisdom. If for some reasons illusion happens to arise, one should strive for causing one's mind to see it as primordial wisdom through the remembrance of view (the view of emptiness), as if ice melts into the river. With regard to the identification or the searching of one's mind, one should direct one's mind internally and then try to find out where it is located, what is the colour of it, what is the shape of it and so on. The fact is that the mind does not possess the quality of form, colour and shape etc., rather it should be recognized as mere clear, mere knowing, mere flickering, experiential awareness. Having so recognized, when there arises the slight experience of spontaneity (*rang byung gi nyams*), then one has realized one third of the quality of mind known as 'characteristic of clear mind' (*gsal ba sems kyi mtshan nyid*). Further searching for the mind, one reaches at the stage where one is ascertained of the emptiness of mind, which is free from birth, cessation and endurance. At this stage one realizes the two thirds of the quality of mind, which is known as 'the nature of empty mind' (*stong pa sems kyi rang bzhin*). When one experiences the nature of mind as empty, it is not that everything becomes empty like space, rather it should be seen as mere clear, mere knowing, where anything can be reflected clearly and seen directly in regard to its self nature or entity. One comes to realize that there is nothing to hold unto and therefore one comes to the conclusion that it is emptiness. Clarity and emptiness are not a separate entity, the nature of mind is empty and the mind, which identifies the emptiness, is itself clear. The mind is clear, when it is empty and it is empty when it is clear. This is known as the coalescence of luminosity and emptiness. When one generates a genuine experience on this point from within, then whatever appears to one's mind appears as the manifestation of 'inseparability of samsāra and nirvāṇa' (*'khor 'das dbyer med*). At this stage one realize the complete quality of coalescence of luminosity and emptiness of mind.

In the more advance level, one has to recognize 'the primordial innate wisdom' (*gnyug ma lhan skyes kyi ye shes*). This should not be recognized as the general mind or the illusion mind, rather it should be identified as the basic mind which is non-illusive, coalescent of

luminosity and emptiness. To this, there are various epithets as seen in the sūtra and tantrik literatures, viz., the mind of complete purification (*rnam byang gi sems*), the essence of Sugata or Sugatagarbha (*bde gshegs snying po*), the mind of clear nature (*rang bzhin 'od gsal gyi sems*), the mind of vajra or adamantine (*sems kyi rdo rje*) etc. The innate illusion mind that appears to one's mental continuum is the adventitious and samsāric one that is the object to be purified. The innate primordial wisdom that enables one to recognize what from beginningless times accompanies the innate illusion mind is nirvāṇa (*myang 'das*) and these two are by nature inseparable. Therefore, it is known as inseparability of samsāra and nirvāṇa from the viewpoint of cause (*rgyu 'khor 'das dbyer med*). When one absorbs in the meditative equipoise on the view of coalescence of luminosity and emptiness of one's mind that is free from dualism, it is known as 'inseparability of samsāra and nirvāṇa and nirvāṇa from the viewpoint of path' (*lam 'khor 'das dbyer med*). There are three steps to follow in order to identify this view of emptiness viz., i) to establish appearance as the nature of mind (*snang ba sems su sgrub pa*), ii) to establish mind as illusion (*sems sgyu mar sgrub pa*), iii) to establish illusion as the lack of inherent existence (*sgyu ma rang bzhin med par sgrub pa*).

With respect to the first step, all the appearances of external objects arise from mind. Without mind there won't be appearances and those appearances are the appearances of mind and nothing else. Through the analogy and scriptural quotations, one initially establishes the non-existence of the appearance of external object, which is mere illusion of our own mind contaminated by ignorance. Having meditated on this, when one has ascertained the appearing object as the reflection of mind, then one should not allow grasping to enter the view of coalescence of luminosity and emptiness and leave one's mind clear and uncontaminated. Thereby one establishes that external objects are nothing other than the reflection of one's own mind.

With regard to 'establish mind as the illusion', the external objects of apprehension are contaminated by the subjective mind or the apprehender, and hence it is illusion. Since the object of apprehension does not exist, the subjective mind is not existent as well. Having established this by scriptural quotations and analogy and meditation, one stabilizes the state of empty nature. Though one has realized the state of illusion of dualism as lacking true existence, if one could not cut the grasping at true existence with respect to the mind of luminosity and emptiness, then this view is merely equal to 'the view of false aspect' (*rnam rdzun pa'i lta ba*) of yogcara. So coming out of this false grasping (at the true existence of emptiness), one should follow the third step i.e. 'the establishment of illusion as the lack of inherent existence'. There are two ways of establishing this illusion viz., i) the establishment

through the 'dependent arising' (*rten 'brel*) and ii) the establishment through 'the inexpressible'.

i) The establishment through the 'dependent arising' (*rten 'brel*)

Though all 'objects of apprehension' and the apprehender or subjective mind are not inherently existent or do not truly exist, one tends to think that perhaps the phenomena other than 'objects of apprehension' and 'the apprehender' do exist. The fact is that all the phenomena are not inherently existent, because the entire 'products' (*'dus byas*) due to interdependent arising lack true existence. The 'non-products' (*'dus ma byas*) are merely conceptual imputed by dependence on the product, or that is to say the 'non-product' is imputed or labeled with regard to the state of the lack of the true existence of product. Therefore Nāgārjuna says, 'Because the product does not exist, how then is it possible that the non-product exists?' (*'dus byas rab tu ma grub pas// 'dus ma byas lta ga la 'grub"//*). Therefore by the fact of interdependent arising, all the phenomena are proved to be empty of inherent existence. Having relied on the genuine scriptural quotations, analogy and reasoning, one should analyze the phenomena of lacking true existence, and eventually when one generates the inner experience through meditation, then one has realized the view equal to the view of Mādhyamaka. The experience of coalescence of such a 'lack of true existence' and the clarity of primordial innate mind is referring to the 'view of the inseparability of samsāra and nirvāṇa. And this is the supreme path of Mādhyamaka, which is by the reasoning of interdependent arising free from the extreme of eternalism (*rtag mtha'*) and the extreme of nihilism (*rtag mtha'*).

ii) The establishment of the inexpressible (*brjod bral*): By practicing on the above mentioned process, one sees the appearing object as (nothing other than) mind; and mind as the illusion; illusion as interdependent arising. Then one generates ascertainment and experiences all these phenomena without contradiction of what seems to be contradiction each other. The absolute nature of the generation of this experience is beyond expression; it cannot be expressed the way as it is. Hence it is termed as inexpressible. Its meaning can be summed up in the following lines:

'Because it cannot be express by words, its meaning cannot be contemplated.

Because there is no object of meditation and no meditator, there is no object to be meditated upon.

Because there is no object of seeing and seer, there is no object to be seen by wisdom.

Because there is no liberation and liberator, there is nothing to be liberated.'

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ANDREY TERENTYEV

Alkhana, a Buryat Secret Valley of Śrī Cakrasamvara, and its Creator Namnane Lama Janchub Tsultim, 1825-1897)

The history of Buddhism in Russia is basically a part of history of Tibetan Buddhism and the Tibetan form of Buddhism first spread in Russia in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when the nomadic Mongol tribes of Oirats (present-day Kalmyks) and Buryats migrated to the lower reaches of the Volga and to the east of Lake Baikal. Much later another group of Buddhist practitioners joined Russia when the tsarist government annexed Tuva (a region west of Lake Baikal and north of Mongolia) and made it a protectorate of the Yenisei province. Thus we have three traditional areas of Tibetan Buddhism in the country (see the map).

Map of the Buddhist Areas of Russia

In 1917 there were 175 Buddhist temples in our country with about 20,000 residents. All were destroyed before 1940, but the end of 19th, beginning of the 20th century was a

time when they flourished. In the 2nd half of the 19th Century a very special sacred place of Śrī Cakrasamvara was found in Buryatia.

Secret/sacred valleys/lands *(sbas yul)* play an important place in Tantrik imagery. We know Shambhala - the land of Kālacakra, Mkhan pa lung and other valleys 'sealed' by Padmasambhava, and many other 'power places'.

The tradition was continued beyond India and Tibet, and, perhaps, the last example of it is the sacred mountain of Alkhana, situated in the Chita area of Russia[1]. (Pl. 1)

This place, where its separate cliffs, caves, springs, etc. represent main deities of the Cakrasamvara Mandala, is the pure vision of a famous Buryat Siddha 'Namnane-Bakshi' or, Janchub Tsultim *(Byang Chub Tshul Khrims*) - 'precious Guru' of Agvan Dorjiev. (Pl.2 and 3)

The mystic vision of Janchub Tsultim became indisputably recognized by Buryat believers, and the Alkhana area became the main Buddhist pilgrimage place in Russia: even the14th Dalai Lama was taken there by helicopter during his first historical visit to Russia in 1991. (Pl. 4)

Common person can reach there by taking a bus from Chita to Duldurga (about 100 miles); from Duldurga there is a five mile road to the village of Alkhana, and then maybe seven miles to the foot of the mountain – this pathway can be taken by foot or by jeep.

Janchub Tsultim spent many years of his life in these mountains, returning here again and again. His biography, written in verse, describes Alkhana in the following lines:

"The place, known as Alkhana actually is [like]
Incomparable Kanci[2], [the heart place] of the great 24 sites
Of Bhagavan Cakrasamvara – as defined by
The faultless sacred Word [of Buddha].

[From] its high top the boundless horizon [is seen]
Its middle is covered by thick cedar forest
The waters of springs run down from all sides
With waters rich in eight [pleasant] qualities."[3]

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1. see 'Aginsky-Buryat AO' on the map
2. About Kanci see it for example Grub chen *Lûipa'i lugs kyi 'Khor lo sdom pa'i mngon rtogs nag'gros su bkod-pa bzhugs-so.* /23в/
3. *pan chen snang ba mtha' yas. dpal ldan bla ma dam pa rnal 'byor gyi dbang phyug byang chub tsul khrims dpal pzang po'i rtog brjod gus ldan dad pa'i chu gter 'phel ba'i zla ba'i snang ba zhes bya ba bzhugs so|| /9b-10a/* (Buryat manuscript in Tibetan language).

Buryat believers who used to come to pilgrimage to this remote area, used to circumambulate the mountain, climb the main peak and bring offerings to Śrī Cakrasamvara and also to the local spirit (*sa bdag*) named Humchen kara. The offering manuals for this ritual were written in Tibetan by Lamas from Tsugol Monastery and the last of these rituals – 'The Alhkana Serzhim (*gser skyem*)'- was composed in the 70ies of the 20th century by the last of the old generation of Tsugol monks - ven. Zhimba-Zhamso Tsybenov.[4]

Nowadays only few people know that before the revelation of Janchub Tsultim the whole area was just a forest – not a sacred place now known to every Buryat.

The life story of Namnane Lama (Buryat: 'son of Namnan') or Janchub Tsultim, up to now was based only on oral sources[5] but here for the first time a written source is presented, a Buryat manuscript in Tibetan containing the biography of Namnane Lama written by his disciple 'Jam dpal dgyes pa'i blo gros, a photocopy of which is preserved in the archive of the author[6].

The Biography says that Namnane entered the Tsugolsky Monastery *(bKra shis chos gling)* at a young age and his first teachers were the Buryat monks Wangpel *(dBang 'phel)*, Lobsan Lundup (*bLo bzang lhun grub*), Kelsan Zhimba (*bsKal bzang sbyin pa*) and Lobsang Choisan (*bLo bzang chos bzang*). He studied ordinary subjects with these teachers but also Tsonkhapa's *La mrim Chen mo*, Kālacakra and Tibetan medicine.

In due time he received many Tantrik empowerments such as Vajrabhairava, Hayagrīva, 'The Sixteen Drops' of Kadampa and other; and then spent several years in retreats. After that he went to meditate on a remote Alkhana mountain, lost in the taiga forests. (Pl. 5). Being a sincere practitioner, he cured himself from the difficulties in urination at that time just by prayers to the Three Refuges. According to the oral tradition, this beautiful place was a site of powerful shamans who created different obstacles to a rival young Buddhist ascetic. So,

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4. *Grub pa'i zhing mchog nag po bde chen kì la ri'i gnas skyong dgra lha HU™ chen kì ra'i lha tshogs la gser skyem 'bul tshul rnal 'byor re bskor shes bya pa bzhugs so*|| (manuscript in Tibetan language, 6 folios.) On Lama Tsybenov see A. Terentyev. Досточтимый Жимба-Жамсо Цыбенов/ / Земля Ваджрапани. Буддизм в Забайкалье. М.: изд. Феория/"Дизайн. Информация. Картография", 2008, с.326-329

5. See A. Terentyev. Учитель Агвана Доржиева (The Teacher of Dorjiev)// Буддийская традиция: история и современность. Юбилейные чтения, посвященные 150-летию со дня рождежния Агвана Лобсана Доржиева. СПб., 2005. Сс.77-80; Dambinima Tsyrendashiyev. Великий егозорь Шагдар Намнанай (A Great yogachari Shagdar Namnanay) // 'Буддизм России (Buddhism of Russia)', Vol. 41 (2008), pp. 42-50

6. This photocopy I made from the original manuscript borrowed from someone by my late teacher Jimba-Zhamso Tsybenov in 1979

for gaining more spiritual power he decided to travel to China and Tibet. After an odious and long journey he reached 'the beautiful mountain of Mañjughoṣa'[7] and there he received his *dge long* vows from Lama Janchub Rinchen preng (*Byang chub rin chen phreng*) and his monastic name 'Janchub Tsultim'.

Besides, together with two Chinese monks, he received some deep Nyingma teachings there.

He also studied thoroughly Vinaya, and received a number of Tantrik Teachings, such as explanations of the stages of generation and perfection of Vajrabhairava – both 'Thirteen Deities' and Ekavīra, which he also received from Janchub Rinchen preng.

After that, he studied many other subjects, including Logic and Abhidharma, in particular with Yeshe Lhundup and Lcang skya Rinpoche.[8] It is again of special note, that he had heard and studied a number of different manuals on both stages of Vajrabhairava, composed by Jamyang Shepa, Zhang Thag sag pa, Ye shes 'Byung gnas, Yeshey Gyatso, Lobsan Lhundup and 'many other scholars'/13a/. This shows that he had special interest in this teaching, which he later brought to Russia.

Again, after all these studies he performed practices in different retreats, including making '100 000 full prostrations before the statue of the Sandalwood Buddha[9]' /13b/.

This point is of particular interest because 1) from this text we learn that Namnane Lama visited Beijing – the Sandalwood Image was kept there in the Yung He Gun monastery until 1900; 2) it is clear that he had special reverence to this sacred image, and, probably it was this attitude that later inspired some Buryat Lamas (including his personal student Agwan Dorjiev) to make a conspiracy for stealing this famous statue from Beijing and take it to Buryatia.

Then, again after making retreat on Ekavira, he returned to Alkhana and more than a 100 times performed the fasting ritual to Avalokiteśvara in favor of his mother (who passed away?) by that time. In the oral tradition it is mentioned that Jangchub Tsultim was not an ordinary person: he never followed ordinary rules of the monasteries and in the Alkhana mountains he also behaved in an unconventional manner chasing local girls, etc.

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7. The famous Wutaishan in China
8. We do not know exactly the date of these teachings, but probably it was around 1860. It is not clear from the text whether these teachings took place in Wutai Mountains or in Beijing.
9. Most famous Buddha's sculpture, which is believed to be made during Buddha's lifetime

Still he was highly respected in the Buryat monastic community, and the manuscript reports that he was chosen to visit St.Petersburg as a member of a Buddhist delegation of Buryats, and in the palace of the Russian Tsar he successfully performed a protective ritual with a thread cross against an offensive to Buddhist religion which manifested by that time in the Russian capital.

Having returned to Alkhana, he mainly stayed there, at 'the palace of Cakrasamvara' /15a/, meditating and giving Tantrik initiations and teachings in different monasteries from time to time. After collecting large amounts of money, he made another pilgrimage in 1877 to Central Tibet. There he made rich donations to all main monasteries and to the 13th Dalai Lama himself he also offered a Mandala with 500 silver 'sang'. After receiving more teachings and making retreat on Cakrasamvara at Gonsar Monastery, he went on pilgrimage in 1882 to Nepal and then returned back to Tibet, where he spent five years. Then, in 1883, he again went to Wutaishan, where he made a strict 3 three year retreat on Vajrabhairava and received some important Sakya doctrines from his tutor Yeshe Lhundup. In 1887 he returned to Alkhana, and when he visited Tsugolsky Monastery, thousand monks who gathered there on this special occasion greeted him in the most lavish scale. There he gave many teachings and initiations to all who had gathered.

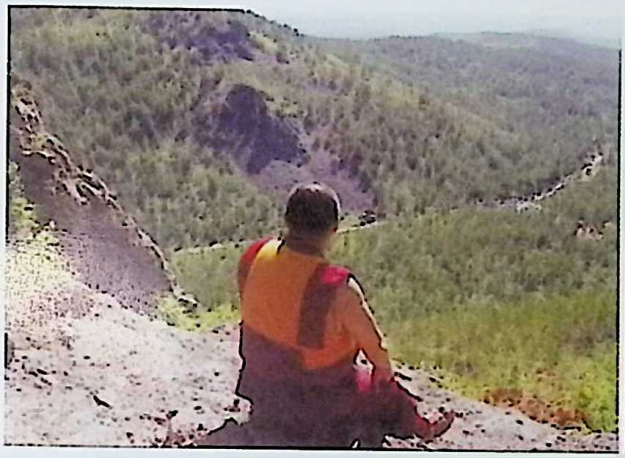
One of his last deeds was in 1897 the donation of 10 000 *sang* of silver to the Tsugol Monastery for the construction of a giant bronze statue of Maitreya, which became famous all over Buryatia. During the communist time this statue was kept disassembled in the Museum of History of Religions and Atheism in Leningrad, and recently it was returned to Tsugol Monastery and installed there again.

Jangchub Tsultim passed away on the 9th day of the 6th month surrounded with many auspicious signs and thousands of clay *tsha-tsha* containing his ashes were made by the monastery. (Pl. 6)

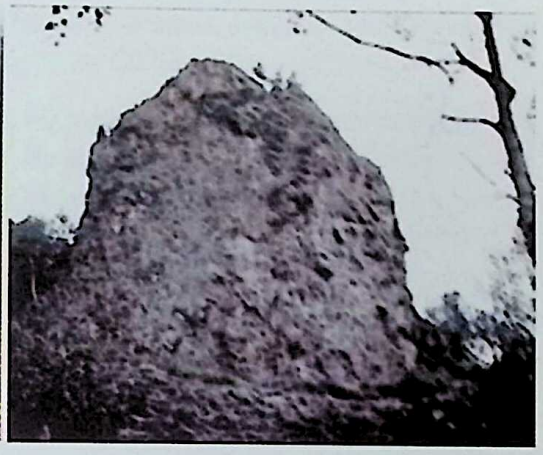
NAMNANE LAMA

From the oral tradition we know about some other important deeds of this remarkable person.

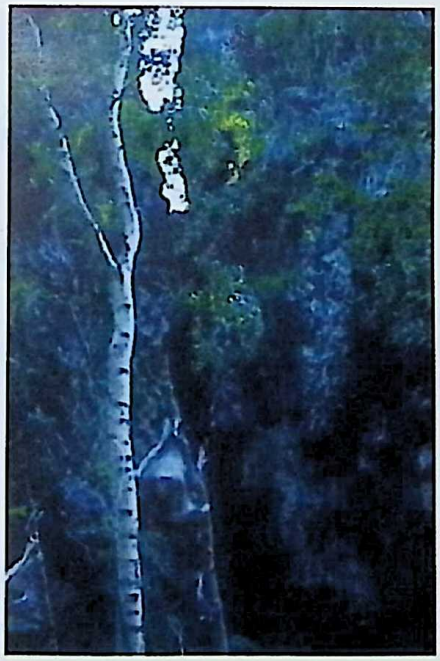
First, he brought from Tibet (the legend says secretly) the most elaborate commentaries on both stages of Vajrabhairava composed by Lhundup Pandita, which were for the first time printed in Tsugolsky Datsan. Never before were these secret texts printed in Tibet, and when Sharpa Tulku some twenty years ago started translating these texts into English he used Tsugolsky prints for this task. Local Buryats believed that he was a reincarnation of Ra-Lotsava, the one, who established Vajrabhairava practice in Tibet.



Pl.1: Panorama from Alkhana, 2007
(Photo from the archives of the author)



Pl.2: Cakrasamvara cliff
(Photo by the author)



Pl.3: Vajrāvarāhī cliff
(Photo by the author)

Pl.4: The Dalai Lama is making the purification ceremony at Alkhana, 1991
(Photo from the archives of the author)

RASHTRIYA SANSKRIT SANSTHAN DELHI
GOVT. OF INDIA
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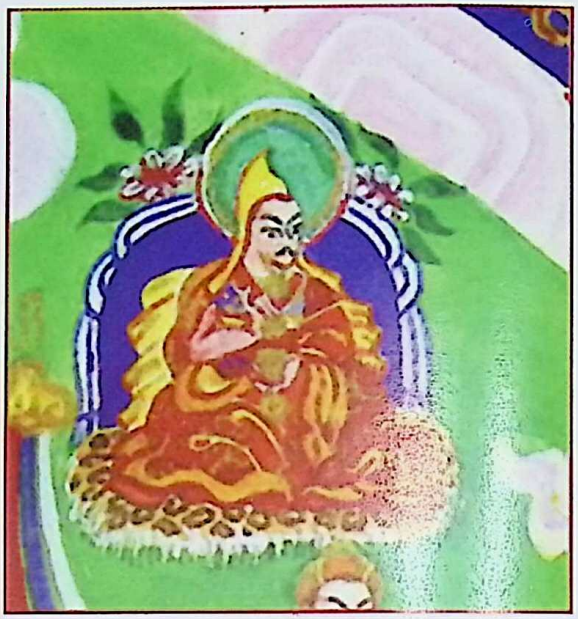
Pl.5: The retreat hut (ri khrod) of Namnane Lama at Alkhana
(Photo 1978 by the author)



Pl.6: Namnane Lama. A fragment of the Vajrabhairava Mandala Painting by Alexander Zheleznov, around 1970.
(The photograph was kindly donated by V. Montlevich).

Pl.7: Lama Agwan Dorjiev, 1921(?) (Photo from the archives of the author)

Pl.8: Lama Sandan Tsydenov with his student Agwan Silnam - the father of the future Lama Dandaron, 1991
(Photo from the archives of the author)

Second – he had at least two remarkable students, who became, perhaps, most influential personalities in Buryat Buddhism in the beginning of the 20th century.

One of them, Dorjiev is widely known outside Russia as the debate partner of the 13th Dalai Lama and one of the main personalities of the 'Big Game'. In Russia he was highly respected as the Representative of HH the 13th Dalai Lama, the recognized Buddhist leader for both Buryats and Kalmuks, and as the founder of the Tibetan Buddhist Temple in St. Petersburg, the first Buddhist Temple in the West. Dorjiev mentions him in his Mongolian autobiography as a 'precious teacher'[10], and in the Tibetan version also indicates his name as Janchub Tsultim Pal zangpo *(dpal bzang po)*. It is worth mentioning that it was this 'precious teacher' who selected the nine teen year old married clerk Dorjiev from the crowd, made him a monk, and brought him to Tibet for education.

His second famous disciple, Sandan Tsydenov, is probably less known outside of Russia, and he is no less significant, though very different compared to Dorjiev. Having spent twenty tow years in lonely retreat contemplating Vajrabhairava, Tsydenov claimed to have reached realization and announced himself to be a 'ruler of 3 worlds'. He established a theocratic state around himself, and also started a new Tantrik, non-monastic Buddhist school, which combined practices from the Gelugpa Tantras with Dzogchen and Mahāmudrā[11]. His follower Lama Dandaron was the founder of the underground Buddhist movement in the USSR at the end of the 1960ies.

Both Dorjiev and Tsydenov (as well as Dandaron) perished in Soviet prisons…(pl. 7 and 8)

Thus, we may conclude that in the 19th century the Buryat Lama Janchub Tsultim:

1) Established the final form of Tantrik practise of Vajrabhairava, the central practice in the Gelugpa order

2) Discovered in his pure vision the hidden land (*sbas yul)* of Cakrasamvara which became the main Buddhist pilgrimage place in Buryatia and in the whole of Russia;

3) Educated two foremost students, Agwan Dorjiev and Lobsan Sandan Tsydenov, who shaped the Buddhism of Russia in the next century (in fact even more than just Russia: the direct student of Agwan Dorjiev, the Kalmuk Geshe Wangyal, who emigrated to USA, was the first teacher of the whole first generation of present-

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10. *Агван Доржиев*. Занимательные заметки. Пер. с монг. А.Д. Цендиной. М., 2003. С. 45

11. More on Sandan Tsydenov see, for example in Д.Л. Баяртуева. Роль Лубсана-Сандана Цыденова в становлении буддизма в Бурятии в конце xix - начале xx века//Вестник БГУ. Улан-Удэ: Бурятский государственный университет. 2007, No.5, pp. 13-19

day Buddhologists such as Jeffrey Hopkins, Robert Thurman, etc., thus bringing the message of Agwan Dorjiev and his teacher Namnaney Lama to the English-speaking world);

4) Attracted the attention of his countrymen to the most sacred Buddha image of the Buddhist world – Zandan Zhuu ('Udayana Buddha statue'), which was then stolen by Buryats from Beijing in 1900 and became the main Buddhist sacrilege of Russia. The legend says that the place where this statue is stationed, becomes the world centre of Dharma (and it is interesting to mention here the prophesy of the present Dalai Lama, made in Canada in 1993, that Russia is going to become the central Buddhist country);

5) Ordered the creation of the bronze statue of Maitreya at Tsugolsky datsan which is still the biggest Buddhist statue in Russia;

6) His other deeds and thousands of students who received teachings, inspiration and initiations from him are difficult to calculate.

This impressive list makes us believe that Namnane Lama Janchub Tsultim, who has never had any official position in the Buddhist hierarchy in Buryatia and was famous for his unconventional behavior, which came to be popularly known as 'crazy wisdom' in the 20th century, was the most influential Buddhist teacher in 19th century Russia.

ANDREA LOSERIES

SIMHAMUKHA
The Lion-faced Durgā of the Tibetan Tantrik Pantheon

One of the most striking features of Vajrayāṇa Buddhism is the use of divinities[1], whose close relationship with non-Buddhist gods or goddesses of medieval India is obvious. The Buddhist Tantras have incorporated a large amount of mystical ideas and practices which were current in India from ancient times, and preserved them just as did the Hindu Tantras in its own way, while both systems had mutual influence and their own deviations.[2] In the mainly sacramental and ritualistic practices of both Tantra systems the practitioners use with best efforts and 'bind to the mind' (tib. *yid dam*) specific forms of deities matching their individual psychological disposition *(iṣṭadevatā)*. In India, with the general equating of Buddhist and Hindu forms of Tantrik rituals assimilation of Hindu deities into the Buddhist pantheon was an ongoing process. The inclusion of local elements became *upāya*, 'skillful means' for presenting the Dharma in accordance with the understanding of the hearer concerned. By use of the familiar the unfamiliar could be presented. The unconventional Siddha tradition with its emphasis on *Sahaja Yoga* and magical rituals flourishing in India between the 8th and 12th centuries was famous for using potent psychological symbols for transcending awareness. When at that time spiritual links were established with Tibet, for Tibetans, this path of liberation fastened by supernatural powers, mystic experience and self-transformation was extremely attractive.[3]

Padmasambhava was the first accomplished Tantrik Indian Siddha who visited Tibet probably at royal invitation in the eighth century and introduced Tantrik Buddhism there. His legacy of Dharma treasures *(gter ma)* left in Tibet for the benefit of future generations and preserved by the 'old' school of Tibetan Buddhism *(rNying ma pa)* included several texts pertaining to the wrathful Wisdom Ḍakini Simhamukha. The Lion-faced Ḍākiṇi is regarded as one of the principle fierce manifestations of Padmasambhava and related to his self-transformation as Simha Rauvava ('The Roar of the Lion') during the time of his receiving transmission from his secret Wisdom Ḍākiṇī Guhyajñāna Oḍḍiyāṇa.[4]

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1. Other then the basic set of the Five Buddhas, usually with Vairocana in the centre
2. See for details Wayman, Alex: The Yoga of Guhyasamaja, Delhi 1977:51ff.
3. Tucci, Guiseppe: Die Religionen Tibets und der Mongolei. Berlin 1970:25ff, Snellgrove, David & Hugh Richardson: A Cultural History of Tibet. Boston 1980 (1968): 115ff.
4. See Loseries-Leick, Andrea: Thangka Calender 2006: March, Wisdom Pulbication; Reynolds, John M.: Simhamukha, the Wrathful Lion headed Dakini. www.vajranatha.com

As a meditation deity of the Higher Tantras she is a wrathful deity with the special function of averting and repulsing (tib. *bzlog-pa*) psychic attacks. Simhamukha appears in the demonic form of a Mātrikā, because her wrathful aspect *(khro gzugs)* skilfully overcomes and subdues violent negative energies. According to Jigmed Lingpa (1726-1798), the famous Nyingmapa master and discoverer of hidden treasure texts or Termas, Simhamukha represents a Nirmaṇakāya manifestation, appearing in time and history, whereas her Sambhogakāya aspect is Vajravārahī and her Dharmakāya aspect is Samantabhadrī, the Primordial Wisdom herself.

Ḍākiṇīs and the Mātṛikās were the old pre-Buddhist goddesses of the earth and sky, Ḍākiṇīs may appear in many different female forms, young and old, some with animal heads. In Hindu tradition, the goddess Durgā is called the Queen of the Ḍākiṇīs and Mātṛikās or witches. In many ways, Simhamukha represents a Buddhist version of Durgā, but instead of riding on a lion and brandishing her weapons with ten arms, Simhamukha has the head of a lion. Among the eight Tantra sections (*sgrub-pa bka' brgyad*) transmitted to Tibet in the 8th century by Padmasambhava, there is the section called 'Mātṛikā curses and spells' (tib. *Ma-mo rbad gtong*), wherein Simhamukha, as the chief divine figure, very much assumes the role of the Hindu goddess Durgā in subduing demons and evil spirits and protecting practitioners from negative provocations of energy coming from the Mātṛikās. Like other nature spirits, the Mātṛikās are disturbed by mankind's destruction of the natural environment and therefore inflict plagues, new diseases, earthquakes, madness, wars, and other calamities upon human civilization. Simhamukha not only protects the practitioner from such cursing attacks, but also sends them back to their source of origin. Moreover, very much like Durgā, she grants life, health, rich harvests, fertile rains and averts hail storms. As a wrathful deity she is the antidote of hatred and an expression of enlightened wisdom and compassion. Like Durgā she is called the queen of the mother goddesses (Mātṛikās) and ghosts (Bhūṭas) whom she controls by her terrifying appearance as an old haggard witch.

In the Tantrik Sādhanā practice of Simhamukha[5], one visualizes that out of the void, from a triangular, dark blue *Dharmodhaya Yantra*, vast and deep, a blue HUNG appears, spreading rays of light and putting an end to all enemies, hindrances, obstacles and demons and burning up all ill omens and mischief. With the sound of HUNG the *Bīja* syllable transforms then instantaneously into Siṃhamukha, dark blue in colour like the midnight sky. Her huge body covers the three realms; her limbs and minor parts are robust and hard. As the queen of the night she averts demonic forces arising from the darkness of consciousness. While her dark blue body colouring is the symbol of the absolute space, her wrathful white lion head symbolizes the purity of the element water. She has a lion face, as she is fearless like the king of animals.

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5. *Seng gdong ma'i sgrub thabs* by Karma Araga, translated from Tibetan into German by Andrea Loseries, Vienna 1990

The lion's mouth gapes, with rolled-up tongue and bared fangs, obscured with a poisonous, fog-like vapour. Her lion's roar terrifies all hostile and harmful forces. Her three round red eyes are wide open to demonstrate awareness of the three poisons of mind, hatred, desire and dullness. Her beard, eyebrows and hair are tawny and blaze like fire. She is naked as the nature of her mind is always uncovered. She dances on the corpse of the insatiable Rudra demon, expressing her utmost experience of wisdom void and guiding the practitioner through the boundaries of ego into the open space of awareness. Therefore she is also called the 'Egoless Diamond Lady' (Vajranairātmya). In her right hand she holds a skull cup filled with blood and in the left a hook knife, both symbols for the unity of wisdom and means. Her Kaṭvanga stepth in her left arm symbolizes her secret consort and great bliss. Being free from desire, hatred and dullness her naked body is wrapped in human and elephant hides. A tiger skin is her loincloth, indication her domination of pride. Her body is smeared with ashes and fat from cremation grounds and clods of dried blood for scaring off the eight classes of demons. As ornaments she wears the eight Nāga kings, the skull crown and the bone ornaments as a symbol of the five Tathāgatas and their wisdom. The long necklace of fifty freshly severed heads symbolizes her overcoming of conflicting emotions. Trampling on the vanquished Rudra demon she dances in a wisdom fire on top of a white lotus, symbol of utmost purity, which has emerged within her dark blue triangular Maṇḍala sphere.

Remembering in this way the subtle significance of her appearance one experiences the inexpressible state of awakened awareness *(rig pa)*. Amid a blazing fire of wisdom light she abides with a million Ḍākiṇīs, all roaring fierce Mantras from their mouths. In the practice of the peaceful and wrathful deities according to Karma Lingpa *(kar gling zhi khro)* she appears as the leader of the eight wrathful Gauris *(ke'ru ri ma brgyad)* and the eight animal-faced witches *(phra men mo brgyad)* who appear in the Bardo state between death and rebirth on the 12th and 13th day after death.

In short, in the Tibetan Tantrik Pantheon the wrathful Simhamukha is classified in the category of Highest (Anuttara) Tantras, and - depending on the lineage - practiced in the style of Mahāyoga or Anuyoga Tantra.[6]

IN WHICH WAY IS THIS BUDDHIST TANTRIK DEITY RELATED TO DURGĀ?

The carliest presence of the goddess Durgā can be traced to the Vedic literature. Durgā is perhaps the most widely worshiped deity of Śakti. Durgā means one who is difficult to

6. Regarding Tantra classes see Loseries-Leick, Andrea: Tibetan Mahayoga Tantra. New Delhi 2007

approach. However since she is the mother of universe she is the personification of tender love, wealth, power, beauty and all virtues.

Durgā means also Remover of distress. Like her Buddhist equivalent Simhamukha the goddess Durgā represents a united front of all divine forces against the negative forces of evil and wickedness. The gods in heaven decided to create an all-powerful being to kill the demon king Mahiśāṣura who was ready to attack them. At that very moment a stream of lightning dazzled forth from the mouths of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva and it turned into a beautiful, magnificent woman. Unlike the Buddhist Tantrik Simhamukha who poses as an old witch, Durgā is blindingly beautiful with three lotus-like eyes, ten powerful hands, lush black hair with beautiful curls, a red-golden glow from her skin and a quarter moon on her forehead. She wears a shining oceanic blue attire emitting fierce rays. Her ornaments are carved of gold, with ocean pearls and precious stones embedded in it. Each god also gave her their own most powerful weapons, Rudra's trident, Viṣṇu's discus, Indra's thunderbolt, Brahmā's kamandala, Kubera's gada, etc. Hīmālaya gifted her a fierce whitish golden lion. On the end of the 8th and beginning of the 9th day of waxing moon, Caṇda and Muṇda came to fight the goddess. Durgā turned blue with anger and the goddess Camundā leapt out of her third eye. Her appearance was most powerful with three red eyes, blood-filled tongue and dark skin; who finally killed the twin demons with her sword. On the tenth day of the waxing moon, goddess Durgā killed Mahiśāṣura with her trident.

The image of Durgā, the Eternal Mother destroying the demon, Mahiśāṣura is symbolic of the final confrontation of the spiritual urge of man with his baser passions.

Her superiority was established in the *Kena-Upaniśad*, because it was she who knew the secret of Brahma. She appeared as Umā-Haimavati, another form of Durgā or Bhāvanī. Bhāvanī or Parvatī was more active in killing of demons for the removal of the sufferings of the people.

The *Bhāvanī-Sahāsranam Stutiḥ* contains a thousand names of the goddess Pārvatī/ Durgā. Listed as 77th is the lion-faced Nārasimhī: She is conceived to be the one whose prowess is expressed through compassion. The divinity expresses her compassion as Mātrikās a lion-headed goddess in saving her devotee Prahlada from the clutches of his father Hiraṇyakaśyapa. And listed as No. 576[7]: 'she is the power of spiritual awakening in the heart'.

And also, the *Devī Bhagavata Puraṇa*, the *Varaha Puraṇa* and the *Vamaṇa Puraṇa* provide lists of goddesses which emerged from the body of the great goddess Mahiśāṣuramardinī, the most important form of Durgā with eight or ten arms, cutting off the head of the buffalo-

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7. Nagar, Shantilal: *Yogini Shrines and Shaktipithas,* Vol. 4, Part I Text, Part ii , New Delhi 2005: 171, 194

demon. According to these lists the lion-faced Nārasimhī emerged from the chest of Durgā with sharp claws and nails among 10 goddesses listed.

In the *Devī Mahātmya* (8.14-21) Nārasimhī took the form of Nārasimha, and 'with the shaking of the manes of her neck, she made the stars of the sky fall down on earth.' She is worshipped as Śakti in Tantrik literature, the Puraṇas and other texts and became subsequently known as one of the Śaptamātṛikās: And according to the *Matsya Puraṇa* (179. 2-38) Nārasimhī was created as Divine Mother to drink the blood of hundreds of Andhaka demons.

Images of Nārasimhī we find in the Yoginī Temples of Bheragal and Shadol, Madhya Pradesh (10th cent.), in the Causatha Yoginī Temples of Hirapur, Orissa (9th-10th cent.)[8], of Ranipur Jharial, Orissa (9th cent.). The Ranipur image is shown dancing, four-armed and lion-faced: Two hands hold a skull cup in the left and a sword in right hand, the other two hands are broken.[9] Another image we find at the Śapta-Matara- Śaktipītha of Omkareśvara, Mandhata.[10]

In Indian art the earliest carvings of Simhamukha are noticed in the Stūpa of Amarvati (2nd Century AD). Generally, the face of the lion is a common feature in Indian temple architecture. It appears at the top of the door, niche and windows as well. In another context the fused countenance of man and lion is also known as Simhamukha or Simhālālalā, usually indicating in Indian context Rāhu, the devourer, one of the nine planets. According to the Puraṇas, during the fight between gods and demons for Amṛta, the nectar of immortality, Rāhu, the demon, tried to get a sip of the immortality drink. Yet, the sun and the moon caught him and Lord Viṣṇu cut off Rāhu's head instantly. But the head became immortal and therefore Rāhu tries swallowing the Sun and the Moon when they pass near him, a scene that is repeated during eclipses *(grahana)*. Rāhu is the son of Simhikā, the lioness who symbolizes destruction.

Summing up the common characteristics of Simhamukha and Durgā it is to be noted that both female deities, regarded as the queens of the Mātṛikās, are fighting and destroying negative forces and averting outer and inner calamities, bestowing long life, health, wealth and good harvests. Many are the names and appearances of Durgā, so is Simhamukha seen as the emanation of Samantabhadrī, the primordial wisdom *per se*. Whether riding the lion or wearing its head, the lion's roar is their battle cry which makes the world tremble. In many disguises,

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8. Nagar, Shantilal: *Yogini Shrines and Shaktipithas,* Vol. 4, Part I Text, Part ii ,New Delhi 2005:plate 118 b
9. *Ibid.*, plate 139 b
10. *Ibid.*, 154

as enchantingly beautiful warrior or as a dark, red eyed old witch with bared fangs, she defeats her enemies, the dark side of consciousness, with the blazing wisdom fire of wrath.

Yet, in ritual action there is a difference between the Durgā and Simhamukha, which should not be overlooked. During the annual harvest festival Durgāpuja, celebrated with greatest fervor particularly in Kolkata and in rural Bengal, the entire ritual liturgy is peaceful in character. Translated in Buddhist terms we may speak of a ritual style characteristic of the Lower Tantras (Kriya and Cārya Tantras), with daily worship, praising hymns, ritual baths in the mirror, the fanning, clothing, perfuming and feeding the icon, with the exception on the night of the 8th to the 9th day, when the ritual for the wrathful Camundā is performed in the style of the Higher Tantras, involving intoxicants and meat.

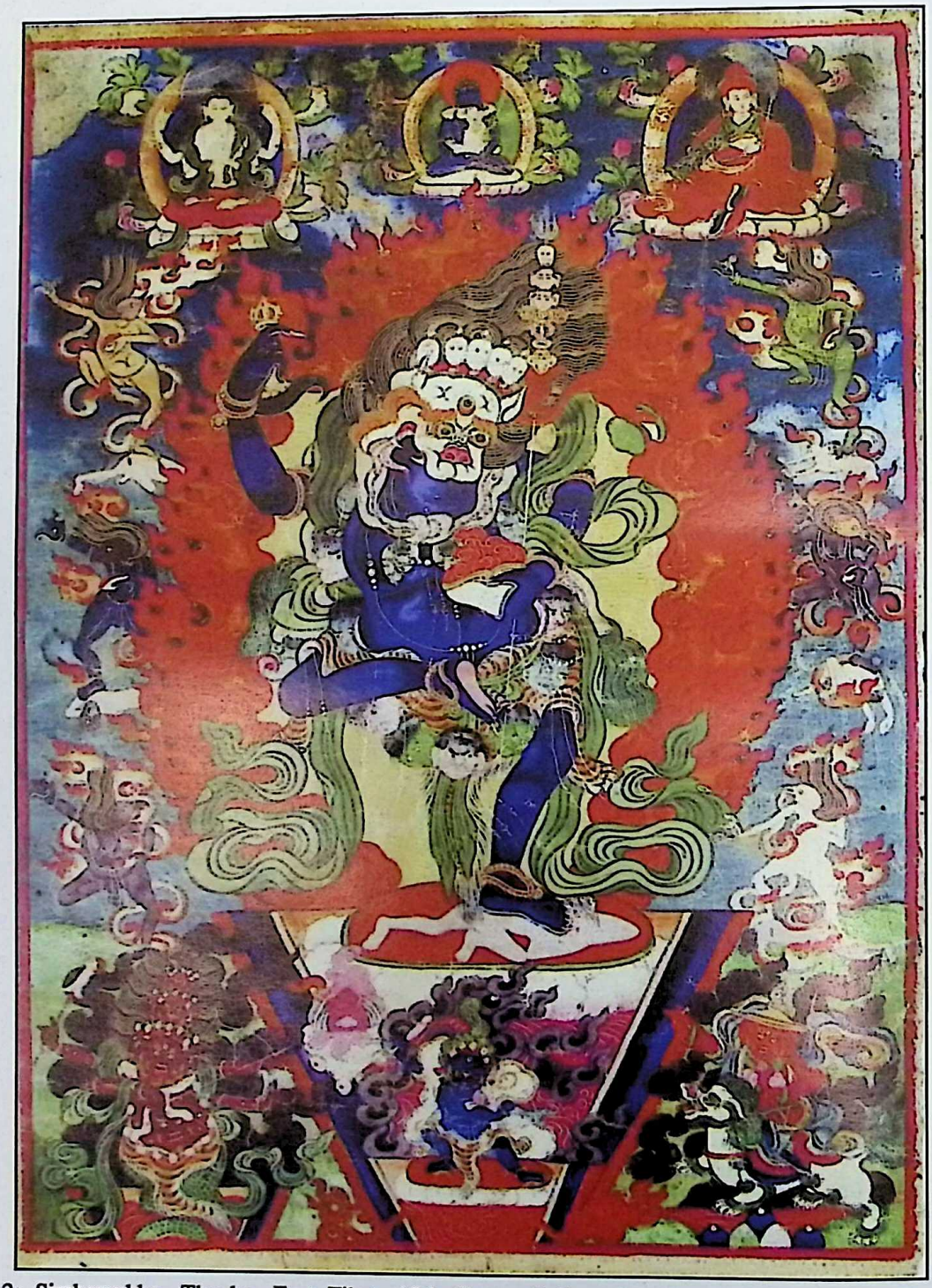
In the Buddhist context Simhamukha is a powerful practice of the highest Tantra class, for averting plagues and severe obstacles and best performed at cremation grounds or other haunted and isolated places. She is certainly not invited to descend and dwell as a guest in the house, as it is practiced during the annual Durgā Puja. She functions as an *Iṣṭadevatā* only, for taming the mind of the Tantrik practitioner who understands his identification with her during meditation to be void in nature without any substance of self.

Both deities are powerful means for psychic transformation, using the lion as the symbol of victory over the dark side of the mental agonies.

ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Simhamukha, the lion-faced Dakini, in: Thangka Calender 2006: March, Wisdom Publication

Pl.1: Durga, Patua Painting, Birbhum District, W.B., 2006, 25 × 33 cm



Pl.2: Simhamukha, Thanka, East Tibet, 19th Cent., Gallery Joachim Baader, Munich; Thanka Calender 2006

Plate 1: The Mandala of Śri Cakrasamvara

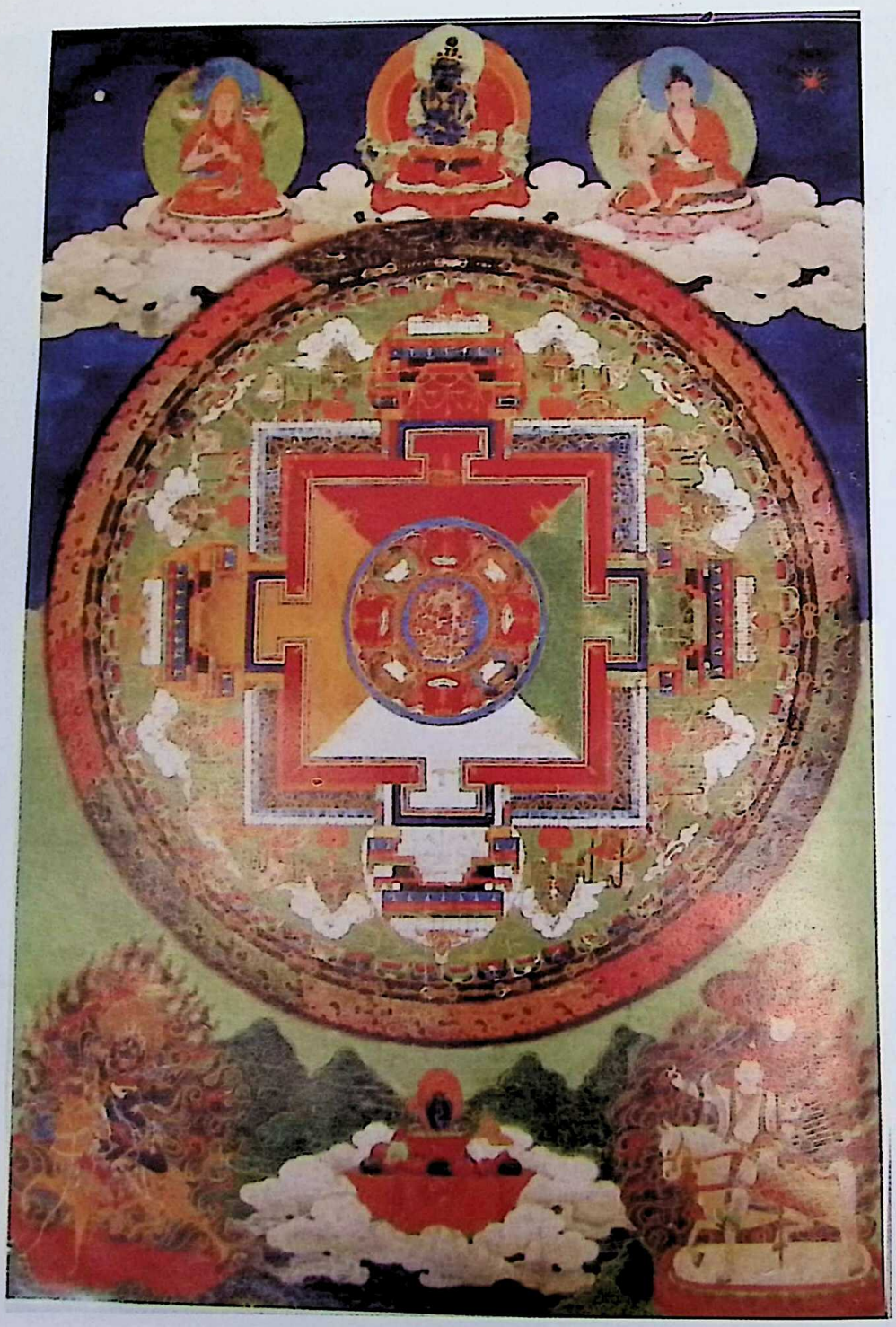


Plate 2: The Mandala of Vajravārahī

ANDREA LOSERIES

Hermeneutics of Mandala Art

Mandalas are representations of cosmic powers in two or three-dimensional forms which play an important role in Tibetan Buddhism, represented on Thankas, in coloured sand or in three-dimensional models. They are mainly supports for meditation and patterns of visualisations. The significance of the Mandala is verbalized in the Tibetan translation word of the Sanksrit into *dkyil 'khor*, 'concentric circle'. It is a willingly composition of diverse elements into unity. Obvious chaos and incomprehensible complexity are simplified into a pattern of natural harmony and pure vision of oneself integrated into a sacred landscape.

The methodology for interpreting the symbolism of Mandala Art presented here is two-fold; iconographically according to the basic text sources such as the Sādhanamālā and the Niṣpannayogavali, and on the basis of personal experiences of meditation at the example of two symbolic Mandalas, namely the 62 Deity Mandala of Cakrasamvara according to the Luipa tradition and the Vajravārāhī Mandala following the Nāropa tradition.[1]

THE MANDALA OF ŚRĪ CAKRASAMVARA[2]

From the state of voidness, in the centre of the protective circle
The four elements are piled up upon another.
On top of it Mount Sumeru
Which is a Vajra fence and tent,
Flaming like the fire at the end of an aeon.
In the centre the seed transforms into a divine mansion of various jewels,
Square with four gates, five stories high and complete in all excellent qualities.
There, within the palace on a multicoloured lotus and sun-disc
Appears instantly Bhagavan Śrī Cakrasamvara - which is: myself!
('The Perfect Yoga' Sādhana of Śrī Cakrasamvara)

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1. Both paintings have been included in the Thanka Calender 2010, Wisdom Publication, for which iconographical descriptions the author signed responsible. *Tibetan Art Calender 2010*, Wisdom Publication, Somerville (English), Schneelöwe, Oberstdorf (German), Maison Edition Medicis, Paris, (French); 2009
2. Tibet, 19th Century, Gallery Joachim Baader, Munich, 23 × 30 cm, Thanka Calender 2010: December

The Tantra of Śrī Cakrasamvara is for the schools of the Kagyupa *(bka' rgyud pa)* the most important deity practice. The text dates back to the eighth century. Within the system of Buddhist Tantra it belongs to the fourth or highest class and is classified as a Mother Tantra, meaning that the practice of the inner channels emphasises on the solar and the experience of the bliss-void.

Tantra is essentially a practice, with incantations, breath control, manipulation of energy cells, and so forth, and it is set forth in its principal revealed scriptures, authoritative commentaries and actual practice. As Lord Atīśa said, it is enough to practice one Tantra to reach full enlightenment, as each Tantra in itself is a complete path to Buddhahood. Tantra uses two wings: the perfection of wisdom as the cause and the skilfulness of means as the fruit. Tsongkhapa said: "Holding the form of the void is the cause; the fruit is the adherence to incessant compassion. The indissoluble union of voidness and compassion is called 'mind of enlightenment' (bodhicitta).[3]

The Tantra of Cakrasamvara, "Who stops the Wheel", in Tibetan translated as 'The Wheel of highest bliss' *('khor lo bde mchog)*, comprises thousands of texts and commentaries by Indian masters. When counting only the commentaries of the Indian Mahāsiddhas they mount up to 141. It is said that this Tantra was transmitted for the first time at the peak of Mount Meru on request of Vajravārāhī during an age of degeneration for transmuting mere sexual lust into the experience of the enlightening bliss-void. In India many Siddhas have practiced this Tantra and attained by this means full enlightenment. However, there are three protagonists of Cakrasamvara Tantra, the Mahāsiddhas Luipa, Kāṇhapa and Ghaṇṭapa. Consequently the texts and their teachings on it had been translated into Tibetan by masters such as Marpa or Kha Lotsawa. The Kadampas *(bka'dam pa)* in Tibet were the first to practice the Luipa tradition, developing a complex ritual system with 108 different empowerments *(dbang)* relying on the sixty-two deity Mandala with the four faced and twelve armed Cakrasamvara. This system was later adopted by Tsongkhapa and the Gelugpa School, as well as by the Sakya pa and Kunga Zangpo.

There are different traditions of Cakrasamvara, mainly a Mandala of 62 divinities, of five divinities or one divinity only.

On this scroll painting the sacred 62-fold Mandala of Śrī Cakrasamvara according to the Luipa tradition is depicted. Abhāyakāra (11th cent.) describes in his Niṣpannayogavali the Mandala of Cakrasamvara as consisting of three wheels (cakra) of the planes of mind, speech and body. The visualisation process starts from the state of void, creates stage by stage the five elements with Mount Meru in the centre on which the divine mansion of the deity is

3. Transl. Alex Wayman: The Buddhist Tantras: Delhi 1973: 4

manifesting. The approach into the Mandala, from outside to inside, is the path of awakening, where one recognizes oneself finally as the central deity.

In this 62-fold Mandala Cakrasamvara is appearing with four faces and twelve arms, holding Vajra and Bell, his main feature while embracing his consort Vajravārāhī. He is of blue colour and she is red, holding a skull cup and a hook knife in her hands. Both are half wrathful, displaying the rage of sexual abandonment in a dance of wisdom-bliss and trampling into dust egohood and the grasping of duality, the male and female corpses under their feet.

Śrī Cakrasamvara, the Heruka in the centre in embrace with the consort, is given the correspondence to 'right Samādhi'. On top of his head is his parental Buddha Akşobhya, while his consort Vajravārāhī belongs to Vairocana.[4]

They are surrounded by four female deities, the blue Ḍākiṇī in the east, representing the mindfulness of body, the green Lāmā in the north representing the mindfulness on feelings, the red Kaṇdarohā in the west representing the mindfulness on natures and the yellow Rūpinī in the south representing the mindfulness of thoughts, all four of them belonging to Buddha Ratnasambhava and carry a skull cup and a hook knife. In the intermediate directions of the circle are four skull bowls filled with the sacred "Five Nectars" and "Five Meats".

The following circle is the "circle of mind" occupied by eight couples of blue colour, they are under Akşobhya, ranging in the sky.

The third "circle of speech" consisting of eight red couples belong to the family of Buddha Amitābha and range upon earth.

The next "circle of body" with eight white couples is under Vairocana and dwells beneath the earth.

The last "circle of pledge" (samayacakra), four bicoloured goddesses and four guardians with animal heads are under Amoghasiddhi.

These female deities together with the main consort Vajravārāhī represent the thirty-seven natures accessory to enlightenment as goddesses, an important feature of the path of Tantrik Buddhism.

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4. Compare and see also Gray, David B.: The Cakrasamvara Tantra (The Discourse of Śrī Heruka). A Study and annoted Translation. New York 2007; Kelsang Gyatso Geshe: *Essence of Vajrayana. The Highest Yoga Tantra Practice of Heruka Body Mandala.* Delhi 2000 (1997); Dawa-Samdup, Kazi (Ed.): *Śrī Cakrasamvara Tanṭra. A Buddhist Tantra.* New Delhi 1987 (Calcutta 1919)

An interesting characteristic of this particular scroll painting is the elaboration of the eight great cemeteries at the outer border of the Mandala. In the upper middle part of the Thanka, blue Vajradhara, the primordial Buddha, holds a Vajra and bell as the symbols for wisdom and means over his breast, as does Cakrasamvara. The two Indian yogis at his side, their hair traditionally tied up in a topknot, holding skull cups, depict the Siddhas Luipa and Indrabhūti, who transmitted the original Mandala. The space of the Thanka is filled with seventeen Ḍākiṇīs, specifying that this Tantra is a Mother Tantra and thus the participation of a female is crucial for the attainment of enlightenment.

THE MANDALA OF VAJRAVĀRĀHĪ[5]

Great Wisdom of Prajňāparamitā
Permanently embraced by the supreme Great Bliss Samvara,
Your mouth ends and destroys darkness
By shouting the sound PHEM.
Oh, Devī, please protect me!
(Five Deity Sādhanā of Vajravārāhī)

In order to begin any Vajrayāṇa practice the practitioner must first receive the empowerment *(sbang bskur)*, the transmission *(lung)*, and the gradual instructions *(khrid)* regarding the outer, inner, and the secret meditation practices from a competent, qualified master. This applies also to the Sādhanā on the Five Deity Mandala of Vajravārāhī, a yoginī tantra whose instructions are given only to students who possess and diligence. The Sādhanā is meant to be practiced in cemeteries or other secluded places of individual inspiration.

The Sādhanā follows the tradition of the Indian Mahāsiddha Nāropa, who, in this Thanka, is depicted in the upper-right corner seated on a lotus and moon disc, floating on a cloud with a damaru in his right hand and a skull cup in his left. The Buddha Vajradhara, the revealer of this yoginī Tantra, appears next to him in the centre holding a vajra and a bell. In the left corner is Tsongkhapa (1357-1419), founder of the Gelugpa School, with his characteristic yellow hat and the emblems of Maňjuśrī the wisdom sword and a copy of the Prajňāparamitā.

In the centre of the Mandala, the goddess Vajravārāhī is depicted in red colour with a flaming yellow mane, dancing in a fierce fire of wisdom in a dark blue void. She has one face and in her hands she holds a blood filled Kapāla and a hook knife, as well as a khatvaṇga staff, the symbolic presence of her consort Samvara. She is surrounded by eight lotus petals, four of which act as seats for the intermediate entourage of Vajravārāhī, which are represented

5. Mongolia, 18th/19th Century, 40 × 59,5 cm, Gallery Joachim Baader, Munich; Thanka Calender 2010: June

by their respective symbols – in the east, the blue Vajra Ḍākiṇī in form of a Vajra; in the south, the yellow Ratna Ḍākiṇī represented as a jewel; in the west, the red Padma Ḍākiṇī as a lotus; and in the north, the green Karma Ḍākiṇī as a sword. In the four intermediate directions, the four skulls are placed as inner offerings containing the consecrated wisdom essences of the Five Meats (*sha lnga*: human, cow, dog, elephant and horse) and the Five Nectars (*bdud rtsi lgna:* urine, stool, menstrual blood, semen and saliva). The perimeter is lined in the four colours of the Ḍākiṇīs, and hook knives in the four gates and four intermediate directions symbolize their presence as guardians of the palace.

Outside the perimeter, four cross-sections of the mansion are depicted, the four gates of which are beautifully decorated with curtains bells, victory banners, and dharmacakras guarded by two antelopes in reference to Buddha's first sermon at Sarnath. Flower vases and curtains of precious stones cover the balconies and in each corner of the palace stand great umbrellas as sunshades. In the surrounding garden, eight yogis in different āsānās represent the Eight Great Charnel Grounds, which are at the very edge of the protective circle *(srung 'khor)* in Vajrayoginī practice. In the Heruka practice, these yogis sit directly outside the circle. Each charnel ground contains a mountain, lake, tree, raincloud, nāga, stūpa, directional guardians and a regional guardian.

At the exterior of the Mandala, a circle of lotus petals, an indestructible vajra wall, and a blazing wisdom fire protect the Mandala from all disturbances, making it an impenetrable pure world of its won.

Beneath the Mandala are the protector *dPal ldan Lha mo* or Śrī Devī, *on the left, and Tshangs pa dkar po* or Sita Brahmā, on the right.

SUSANNE VON DER HEIDE

Wall Paintings of Meditative Deities from the Mahāyoga Tantra in an Ancient Cave Temple in Upper Mustang

During their earlier visits, late Dzongsar Ngari Chödje Thingo Rinpoche and S.v.d.Heide had rediscovered near the Tibetan border a complex of various temple sites, some hewed out of the rock. Exceptional wall paintings probably dating back to the late 11th, beginning of the 12th and the 14th century were found, the iconographical features of which are common to the Kadam, the Sakya and Drukpa Kagyu traditions (Pl. 1).

Studies were subsequently carried out to sift through the art-historical evidence of early Buddhist wall and ceiling paintings in ancient cave temples throughout Upper Mustang (most of which are now threatened by decay), document them and ascertain relations among them.

I shall introduce three different sites within the present monastic complex, which is called Chödzong (*chos rdzong*), 'Stronghold of Dharma'. It contains paintings from different centuries that are seemingly under the influence of different schools, as witnessed by, among other things, how Tantrik themes are treated.

WRITTEN HISTORY

Of particular interest for the history of Chödzong is a ting-yig (*spring yig*) – a written message – dating from the 13th century that Dzongsar Ngari Thingo Rinpoche was able to examine at the palace of Lo Manthang. This document refers to the cave temple site and identifies it as being affiliated to the Kadam and Sakya traditions. The message itself was written by King Bumde gön, the influential ruler of Gungthang (Bum lde, 1253-1280).

In the message, he orders that puja ceremonies should henceforth always be carried out in Chödzong in honour of Lama Sharawa Yonten Dakpa (1070–1141), a famous Tibetan master of the Kadampa school, originally from Zho, who according to the ting-yig had stayed for three months in the holy temple of Chödzong when he could not proceed further due to high water blocking his way.

Lama Sharawa Yonten Dakpa's teacher was the well known Potoba (1031-1106), an abbot of the Radeng Monastery, and one of the three important disciples of the famous Kadampa Master Domtönpa (1004-1064), who himself was a disciple of the great Kadampa-

Master Atīśa (982-1054). Atīśa had been in Mustang on his way to visit Purang-Guge at the invitation of Yeshe Ö and Byang chub Ö, as Ngari Thingo Rinpoche, citing a biography on Marpa (1012-1097), noted.[1]

Therefore it can be assumed that a Kadampa temple already had been established at Chödzong during the 11th century, either before or after the visit of Lama Sharawa Yonten Dakpa. That would accord with the dating of the wall paintings at the first discovered site of the Chödzong monastic complex to the late 11th or early 12th century. Indeed, it is possible that this Kadampa temple site was erected soon after the visit of Atīśa to Mustang in 1041 on his way to Purang-Guge, as Dzongsar Ngari Thingo Rinpoche inferred on the basis of documentary evidence. This may be why Lama Sharawa Yonten Dakpa preferred to stay at Chödzong to wait until the water level of the river went down.

Just how highly the lama was esteemed - even more than hundred years later - and presumably the Kadampa School as a whole as well-is attested by King Bumde-gön's written order to carry out puja ceremonies at the Chödzong temple.

Lo Manthang along with the neighbouring areas of Dolpo and Manang was ruled during the 13th century by the Gungthang king Bumde-gön, who had attained power mainly with the backing of the great Sakya master Phagpa (1235-1280), who was the religious and secular ruler of Tibet during that time, and the Mongolians. The Gungthang rulers were in fact related to the Sakya Khön family.

It may be noted, finally, that Padmasambhava is said to have visited the site where Choedzong later stood on his way to Tibet, and a rock with the imprint of his head can still be seen there.[2]

ATĪŚA'S INFLUENCE IN MUSTANG

Dzongsar Ngari Thingo Rinpoche cited a biography of Marpa[3] that reports that Atīśa travelled to Guge via the old trade route through Upper Mustang and met Marpa there when the latter was serving the great Tibetan scholar NyöLotsawa (*gnyos lo*)[4] in Garphu (Gerphu) and Nyephu. We know that during his three-year stay in Purang-Guge Atīśa had a disciple from Lo with him whose name was Lama Tönpa Yangrab (*ston pa yang rab*), and who later became well known throughout West Tibet.[5]

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1. See *mar lo rnam thar dad pa 'i my gu*, Fo. 36, 4-6 and find explanations in the next chapter
2. concerning the life of Padmasambhava see Essen and Thingo /Dzongsar Ngari Rinpoche 1991
3. *Mar lo rnam thar mthong ba don yod*, fol. 9r, 19 and fol. 10v, 1-9
4. short for *gnyos lo tsā ba*
5. see Roerich 1996: 262; Dhungel 2002: 49

It is interesting that before his journey to Purang-Guge via Mustang Atīśa, who is described as a talented artist, had spent around one year in the Kathmandu Valley. There he met different sculptors and other artists, many of whom were influenced by Indian Pālā art.[6] It can therefore be assumed that Atīśa paved the way for the diffusion of Indian Pālā art in West Tibet and for Nepalese artists to visit the prosperous kingdom of Purang-Guge.

We know now that the great Buddhist masters Atīśa, Marpa and Milarepa (1040-1123)[7] and the even earlier master Rinchen Zangpo[8] had all spent some time during the 11th century in the Lo Mustang region, in some cases on their way to Purang-Guge. They all contributed to a renaissance of Buddhism set in motion by the king and later Lama Yeshe Ö and his nephew Jangchub Ö, who continued the legacy of his uncle.[9]

This had an enormous impact on the neighbouring areas of Purang-Guge and Mustang, Mustang being the southernmost region to which the Buddhist revival spread. Monasteries and temples from different Buddhist schools were founded. Famous Buddhist scholars from the Nyingma and Kadampa traditions, and from the Sakya and Kagyu schools as well, travelled to or from West Tibet through Mustang, or else through other regions (e.g. Ladakh, Kinnaur or Spiti) on their way to Purang-Guge, which controlled almost all these areas during the 10th and 12th centuries.

It was during this time of prosperity and change under fresh impulses from mainly West Tibet, but also from the Kathmandu Valley, that the Chödzong monastic complex seems to have been founded, followed by the construction of chapels and temples, which continued to be erected even after the 12th century.

THE OLDEST SITE IN CHÖDZONG

The oldest paintings of the site were found below the main complex in a fragmentarily preserved grotto (Pl. 2), which probably originally formed part of a small temple. Both the walls and roof of this temple, the whole of which tapers upward pyramidally, are furnished with paintings. In the upper portion is portrayed what is presumably a scholar of the Buddhist

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6. see Martin 2001, 142-144
7. Milarepa also had visited Mustang and stayed there one year on his way to lake Mānāsārovar, as Ngari Thingo Rinpoche found in one of the biographies written on Milarepa (*mi la ras pa' i rnam mgur* 1999, 365-369),
8. see Klimburg-Salter 1997: 34
9. see Vitali 1996

Kadampa school,[10] as one can infer from the form and colour of his headgear. In the lower portion appear the Bodhisattvas Avalokiteśvara, Amitāyus and Vajrapāni. The paintings can be dated to the end of the 11th or beginning of the 12th century, and thus are the oldest images found at the complex (Pl. 3)

THE MAIN COMPLEX: ENTRANCE HALL, LHAKHANG AND THE TEMPLE DEDICATED TO INITIATORY AND PROTECTIVE DEITIES

A bit above the site of the first discoveries can be found the main temple of the Chödzong complex (Pl. 4) including an attached temple dedicated to initiatory and protective deities (*srung ma*). The temple is crowned by a pyramid-like vault, which leads over to a complex of caves that are no longer accessible. The front side of the temple consists of layers of stone and earth, while the backside of the complex gives way to the preponderance of conglomerate found in the cave complex. This cliff cave site can be assigned to the Buddhist Drukpa Kagyu tradition. The main building contains an entrance hall, along with a *lha khang*, and towards the back, a temple dedicated to initiatory and protective deities that is connected to the *lha khang* by a narrow, very low corridor. The entrance hall of the main temple is about 5.50m long and 1.50m wide. Along the sides the entrance to the *lha khang*, to the right and left, there are wall paintings with images of the Lokapālas, protectors of the cardinal directions.

To the right are Virūpāksa, protector of the west, and Vaiśravaṇa, protector of the north. To the left are Virūdhaka, protector of the south (his image has faded), and Dhritarāstra, protector of the east.

On the right-hand wall is also depicted a Wheel of Life (bhavacakra). On the left-hand wall there are barely recognizable images of Buddha

Śākyamuni and Buddha Amitāyus surrounded by long life symbols. The wall paintings date from a more recent period, and were coated with a protein-based glaze, which led to the early decay of the motifs. Originally there were probably older paintings in the entrance hall, which were then later painted over. The wall paintings in the *lha khang* should also be assigned a more recent date.

It is said that a number of lamas lived at the site 60 to 80 years ago and made an attempt to restore some of the old paintings. Canonical writings have been placed on a pedestal next to the corridor in the rear part of the *lha khang*. Next to the pedestal is the altar area, with

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10. The Kadampa tradition is an early Buddhist school that arose parallel with the Nyingma. Its doctrines were passed on down through the Sakyapas and, more importantly, the Gelugpa schools. Besides, the Kadam teachings were also introduced into the Kagyü schools through Gampopa.

its butter lamps, *tsha tsha* (votive earthen offerings), and statues. To the right of it the empty seat of the abbot of Chödzong draws immediate attention. His ritual drum still hangs above his seat. Other ritual instruments, such as an oboe (*rgya gling*) and bone trumpet *(rkang gling)* can be seen. The ceremonial implements and the fixtures of the *lha khang* indicate the former presence of monks, who gathered here to perform rituals in common. Visible inside a wooden case in the centre of the altar area are, from left to right, Vajradhara sitting on a lotus throne, a *tsha tsha* next to him (meant as a votive offering), the Bodhisattva Padmapāni in a standing position to the right of it, and finally a statue of the Green Tara.

Other figures are located on top of the wooden case: from left to right, Padmasambhava, in the middle next to him a statue of the Bodhisattva Ṣadakṣarī-Avalokiteśvara, and to the very right a statue of a scholar.

On a pedestal shelf that extends along the wall there is an approximately 1 m high statue of the Buddha Sākyamuni centrally positioned above the altar area, and flanked by two small Sākyamuni sculptures, 80 cm and 55 cm in height. To the right of the central figure there is a statue of Maitreya, some 90 cm, followed by a smaller Buddha Sākyamuni, ca. 75 cm high. The five statues can be dated to the 16th or 17th century.

On the wall behind the altar area are seen scholars from the tradition of the Kagyu School. The paintings on the right-hand side represent, starting at the altar and moving towards the front entrance, first of all Padmasambhava, flanked by the Yidam Guru Dragpo and Ḍākiṇī Simhamukha. These are followed by the 42 peaceful deities of the Mandala of the 100 peaceful and wrathful deities (*zhi khro'i dkyil 'khor*), in the middle of who are the Ādi-Buddha Samantabadra, flanked by the Tathāgatas Amitābha, Amoghasiddhi, Akṣobhya and Ratnasambhava, each in union with his female partner. In the *lha khang* entrance area, on the sidewall to the right, are paintings containing depictions of a local *tsen* protective deity *(btsan)* along with the protective deity Caturbhuja-Mahākāla. On the left-hand side of the entrance are wall paintings displaying the protective goddess.

Śrī Devī (*dpal ldan lha mo*) astride her mule, and next to her the raven-headed Dharmapāla Kākamukha. These paintings are followed on the left-hand wall (as seen from the entrance) by the 58 wrathful deities of the Mandala of 100 Peaceful and Wrathful Deities, with Śrī Mahā-Heruka in the middle. Next to them is the image of the Buddha Sākyamuni, flanked by two of his favourite disciples and surrounded by the 35 Buddhas of Confessions of guilt.

THE TEMPLE OF THE INITIATORY AND PROTECTIVE DEITIES (*SRUNG MA*) IN THE MAIN BUILDING

Passing through a low, narrow corridor about 1 m long, one reach the pitch-black, cave-like room of 'protective deities', some 3.40 m × 3.35 m. In contrast to the *lha khang*, it tapers in the manner of a pyramid towards the ceiling. Imposing wall and ceiling paintings representing meditation deities of the highest Tantrik level (Mahāyoga Tantra), lineage-holders of the various Tibetan schools and Mahāsiddhas are complemented by six painted earthen/clay figures, some of them life-size, representing protective deities of the Tibetan pantheon. What is unusual about these deities is the fact that they are placed in a random configuration in the temple.

On a stone pedestal in front of the wall along the right-hand side of the corridor stands a painted earthen sculpture of Vaiśravaṇa, ca. 75 cm high. In front of it is a wooden box, in which butter lamps were probably once kept, along with a stone slab for receiving offerings brought during worship.

The central figure in the middle of the temple is a fully rounded earthen statue of the four-armed wrathful Caturbhuja-Mahākāla. About180 cm high, he is sitting on a lotus, and surrounded by his retinue (Pl. 5). Among the retinue are, situated in front of him to the right and left, and next to the right-hand wall, three figures of Karma-Mahākāla Kakamukha (the raven-headed god), each approximately 160cm tall, and each represented in a posture and with a hand gesture of his own (Pl. 6). Further, to the left and right in front of the central figure are the lion-headed Dharmapāla Simhavaktra (appr. 160 cm) and a local tsen *(btsan)* demon (appr. 170 cm), who is featured here as a protective deity (Pl. 7). These two figures, too, also are part of Caturbhuja's retinue. The age of these sculptures is very difficult to determine, given that they have been painted over in places. It appears in any case that the Caturbhuja-Mahākāla and the three versions of the raven-headed deity were sculpted at the same time as the wall paintings of the meditation deities, dating from the 14th century, that surround them. Dharmapāla Simhavakra and the *tsen* protective god are amateurish works in comparison with the other figures, and could not have been produced in the same epoch as the wall paintings. An approximately 70cm-tall statue set on the floor close to the right-hand wall represents the great yogi and poet Milarepa.

The cult room is adorned with wall paintings of the deities of the Mahāyoga Tantra, which suggests that originally initiations and other rituals associated with these deities were performed here. Both stylistically and technically, these paintings compare favourably with a number of the images in the Sumtsek of Alchi Monastery in Ladakh, which were produced much earlier (around 1200). Besides, there are several resemblances with wall paintings of different images at the Ṣadakṣarī chapel, north wall, at the Shalu Monastic complex in Tibet, dated to the early

14th century[11]: the patterns of the fabrics worn by Avalokiteśvara and Rahula, for example, appear very similar to the cloths of the protective deities of the murals at the *srung ma* in Chödzong. Whereas the paintings along the entrance wall have decayed to the point where only fragments are left, the meditation deities of the Mahāyoga Tantra can easily be made out in their rich tones along the left and right side walls and along the front wall of the building. Each of them is surrounded by a mandorla, parts of which consist of flame-like floral elements.

A frieze below the ceiling leads around the entire cult room. It displays images of scholars, Mahāsiddhas and Bodhisattvas, above who is situated an ornamental slat embellished with double flounces *(phur ma)* in imitation of a Tibetan curtain. A frieze running around the whole room is likewise visible beneath the images. It displays representations of the retinues of the meditation deities depicted above it. One can estimate that the cult room was originally fitted out with a total of 15 images of meditation deities. Only the first four representations to the right wall - when looking towards the front - can still be identified. These are the Tantrik meditation deities Buddhakapāla (Pl. 8), Vajrasattva Yogamvara (Pl. 9) and, presumably, the sixteen-armed Cakrasamvara (Pl. 10) together with Hevajra (Pl. 11) each in union with his female partner.

Along the front are depicted, from right to left, the meditation deities Kalācakra (Pl. 12), Dakasagara-Samvara, Vajradhātu (Pl. 13) and Guhyasamāja (Pl. 14), all in union with their partners.

On the left-hand wall, looking from the rear back towards the entrance, there are only three meditative deities, since the fourth one has decomposed. They are the buffalo-headed Vajrabhairava and two images from the series of Pañcakūla-Yamāntakas (Pl.15): first Vajra-Yamāntaka (Pl. 16) and then Padma Yamāntaka, each united with his partner.

The iconographic adornment of the space beneath the dome is devoted to images of the lineage-holders of the various Tibetan schools and to images of Mahāsiddhas, all of them surrounded by life-like floral motifs that fill up the vault of the dome. Unfortunately, the paintings in the vault of the dome that are located above the entrance wall- have been completely destroyed, along with a large surface above the left-hand sidewall. The best-preserved image is that of a scholar, perhaps the son of Khön Khönchog Gyalpo (1034–1102), Sachen Künga Nyingpo (1092–1158), the first of the five Sakya hierarchs and the third to occupy the throne of the Sakya line (Pl. 17).

He is surrounded by other famous scholars of the Sakya tradition: under him to the right, presumably, Phagpa Lodrö Gyaltshen (1235-1280), the religious and secular ruler of Tibet

11. See Neumann, 2001, 40

during the Yuan period; and above the latter, portrayed in somewhat smaller size, the Mahāsiddha Virūpa. Below and to the left of the central figure of Sachen Künga Nyingpo, we can make out, on the basis of his appearance, what is possibly the figure of Sakya Pandita (1182–1251), the most important scholar of the Sakya tradition, and who was so esteemed that he was summoned to the Mongolian court. Above him, and again portrayed in a smaller size, is what seems to be the image of Khön Könchog Gyalpo, the founder of the Sakya school. Over the front side, the central image beneath the vault of the dome is probably that of the Ādi-Buddha Vajradhara, which has suffered much damage. He is flanked below and to his right by a scholar, no longer identifiable, above whom another smaller depiction of the Mahāsiddha Virūpa can be seen. Judging by his headgear, the scholar to the left of Vajradhara may be a lineage-holder of the Kagyu School. Under him to the left is a small figure together with a representation of an unidentified Mahāsiddha.

The paintings under the vault of the dome above the left-hand side wall have all been destroyed except for what is probably an image of the important translator Ngog *(rngog)* Lotsawa (1059–1109) off to the far right, towards the front wall. He is also called Loden Sherab[12], as an inscription that still needs to be accurately read testifies to. The vault of the ceiling can only have been painted after the 11th century, as proved by the type of clothing worn by the scholars. The great Indian master Atīśa introduced this type of clothing for the upper body during his sojourn in Tibet.

THE SMALL INITIATORY TEMPLE ABOVE THE MAIN COMPLEX

The small initiation temple in the uppermost part of the complex of Chödzong was accessible only with special gear, along a vertiginous path. Other cave temple sites and monks' cells above it are no longer within reach. Scholars have more or less been faced with a scene of desolation. Hardly one of the impressive paintings of Tantrik meditation deities, Bodhisattvas and what are probably Sakya scholars - still had recognizable facial features. These figures seem to have been wilfully destroyed, but no one was able to supply any relevant information.

The cave-like cult room hewn out of the cliff – approximately 2 × 3 m – is completely open at the front, the entrance having been destroyed, and what remains having been exposed to the elements. Five representations are identifiable, virtually all on the right-hand sidewall or along the front. A few fragments can be found on the left-hand wall, but there is only one figure that of a deity, which is still relatively intact; all the other images no longer exist. It is no longer possible to reconstruct how the temple site was originally laid out.

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12. *rNgog Lo tsā ba* = the translator *(lo tsā ba)* from *the rNgog* clan. Loden Sherab (blo ldan Shes rab) is his ordination name.

To the right, at the open entrance, the Buddha Amitābha and his retinue can be made out (Pl. 18). Bodhisattvas and scholars, presumably of the Sakya tradition, surround him (Pl. 19). Next to them is the image of Sarvavid Vairocana (Pl. 20) sitting on a lotus throne and surrounded by 37 deities of the retinue from his Mandala. Clearly drawn outlines are visible only on a few images in the cult room, which gives rise to the assumption that the lines were later retraced. The colours red, black and ochre, being more resistant to weathering, are better preserved than, say, the colour blue.

In the middle of the right-hand wall towards the back is a central image, probably that of Sachen Künga Nyingpo or Domtönpa, flanked by two no longer identifiable lamas, one of them being probably Atīśa with a Stūpa in hands (Pl. 21) and surrounded by masters of the Sakya tradition whose faces are no longer identifiable either (Pl. 22). Above Kunga Nyingpo, and below the vault of the ceiling, is the image of what is presumably the Ādi-Buddha Vajradhara (Pl. 23), who, in spite of the destruction, has what appear to be a bell and a vajra in his hands, surrounded by floral motifs.

On the front wall is the twelve-armed meditation god Cakrasamvara, in union with his female partner and surrounded by a flame-like mandorla. He, though like the images above him of what appear to be masters belonging to the Sakya tradition, is almost completely unrecognizable. The last identifiable image, located on the left-hand wall, is that of the sixteen-armed Hevajra in union with his partner (Pl. 24). He is surrounded probably by masters belonging to the initiatory tradition of the Sakya School. On this wall, too, alongside floral ornamentation of an archaic appearance, are flame-like floral motifs, but these are only fragmentarily preserved. The remaining paintings on the left-hand wall have by now fallen victim to erosion and weathering.

To judge by the style and colour scheme, the paintings in the cult room cannot have been produced later than the 13th century; and probably not even later than the end of the 12th.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The studies Dzongsar Ngari Thingo Rinpoche and the author carried out at the cliff cave site of Mentsun Lhakhang[13] and the discovery of the cave temples of Dragrangjung, Könchog[14] and now Chódzong, have cast new light on aspects of the continuous development of early Buddhist art in Mustang from the 11th century on, at a time when it was under the influence

13. setforth in a recent public lecture in **Sikkim at the Namgyal Institute for Tibetology in 2008, which will be published in 2010**

14. **also introduced by the author in Sikkim in 2008a**

of Purang-Guge rule in West Tibet. Many scholars on their way to or from Guge and Purang passed through Lo Mustang, the southernmost border district of the area of Western Tibet rule, and often remained there for extended spells. In the following period, under their influence, new temple sites arose along with monastic complexes that contain impressively painted cult rooms and precious ornamentation.

Artists came from far and wide to do commissioned work there, and local workshops also seem to have come up. Hardly anything is known, however, about these early masters in Mustang, their use of paints and other techniques. It remains for other scholars to broaden the little knowledge that this article is meant to provide.

In any case, we can now better understand how a spiritual and cultural centre of Buddhists was able to develop so quickly following the founding of the kingdom of Mustang by King Amepal in the 15th century, inasmuch as a firm basis for it had been laid long before.

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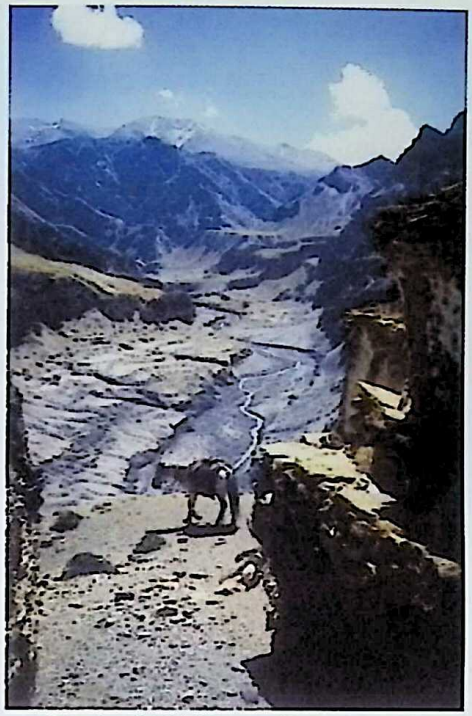
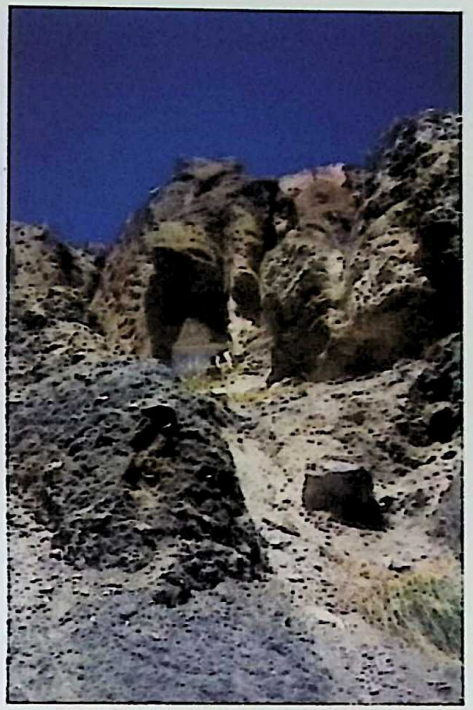
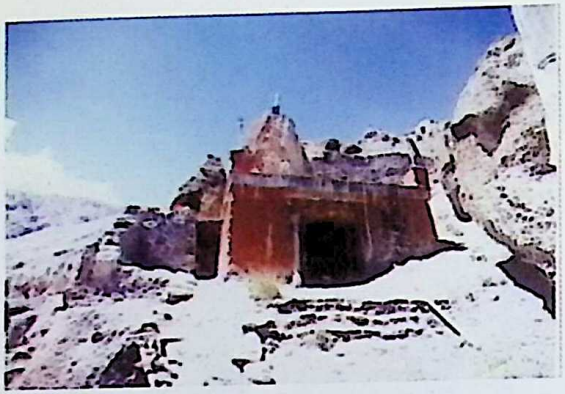


Pl. 1: A hidden valley near the Tibetan border



Pl. 2: Eroded ancient chapel

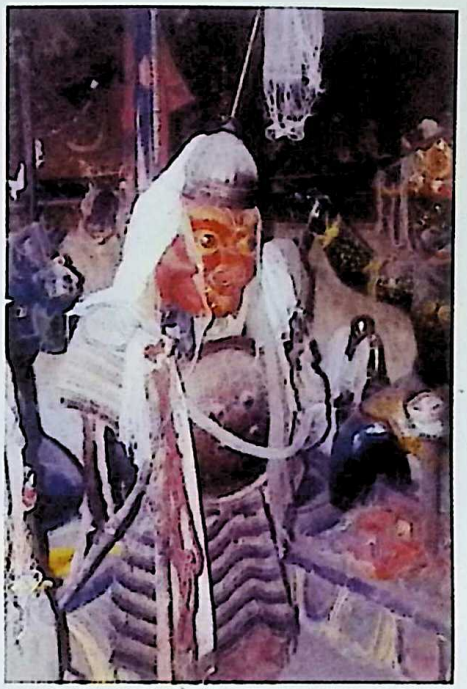
Pl. 3: Master of the Kadampa school & Bodhisattvas Avalokiteśvara, Amitāyus, Vajrapāni



Pl. 4: Entrance of main temple

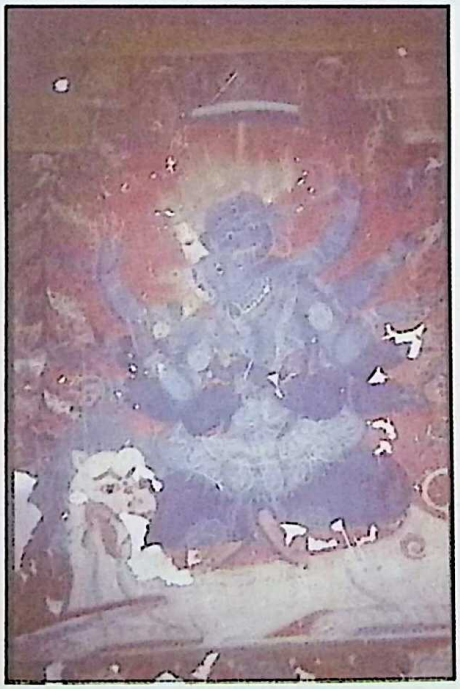
Pl. 5: Caturbhuja Mahākāla and his retinue

Pl. 6: Karma-Mahākāla Kākamukha



Pl. 7: Tsen demon of the retinue

Pl. 8: Buddhakapāla



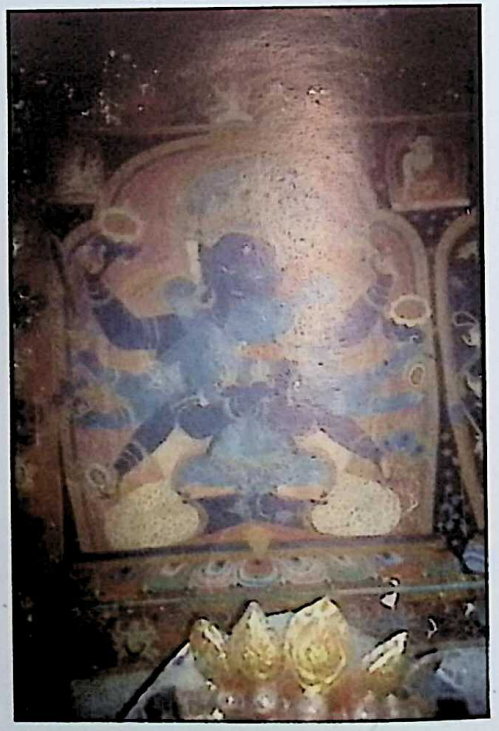
Pl. 9: Vajrasattva Yogāmvara

Pl. 10: Cakrasamvara

Pl. 11: Hevajra

Pl. 12: Kālacakra

Pl. 13: Vajradhātu



Pl. 14: Guhyasamāja

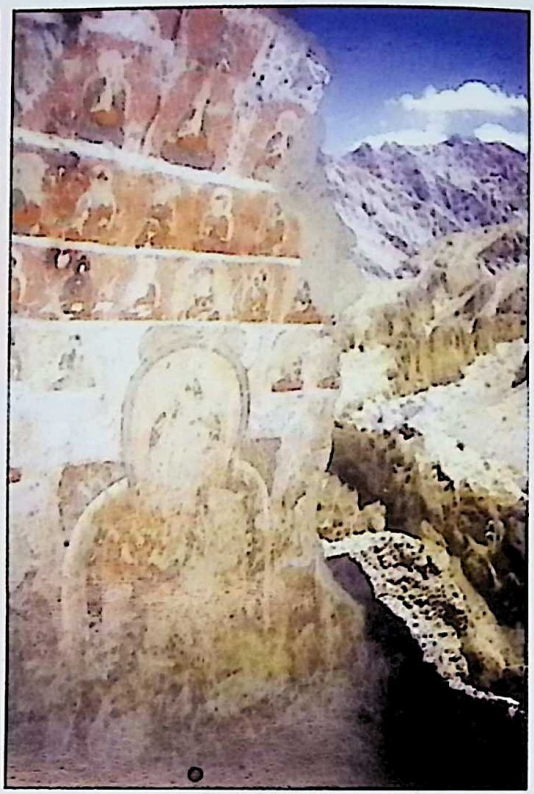
Pl. 15: Vajrabhairava

Pl. 16: Vajra Yamāntaka,
(Pañcakula-Yamāntakas)

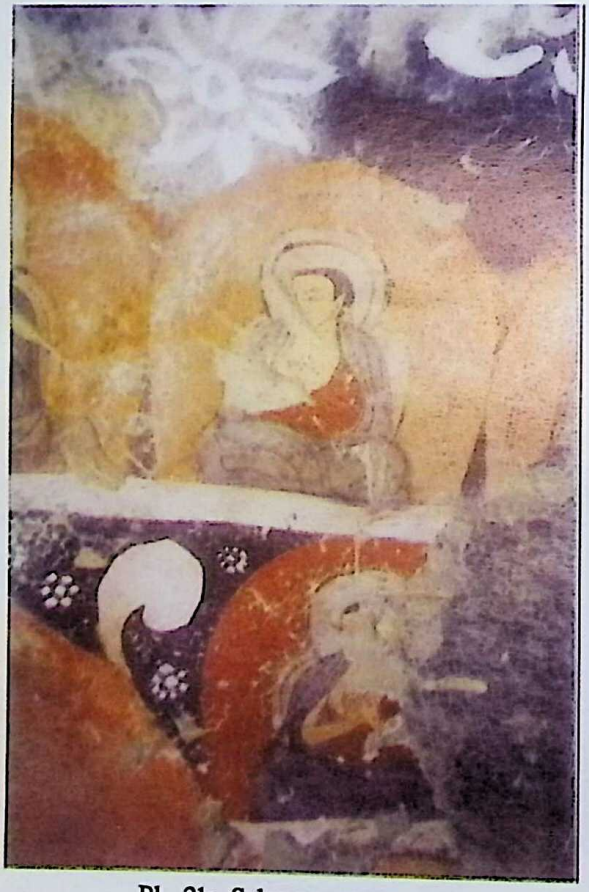
Pl. 17: Padma Yamāntaka
(Pancakula-Yamāntakas)

Pl. 18: Pancakula-Yamāntakas
& Vajrabhairava

Pl. 19: Sachen Kunga Nyingpo (1092-1158), flanked by Phagpa (1235-1280), Mahāsiddha Virupa, Sakya Pandita (1182-1251), Khön Khönchog Gyalpo (1034-1102)

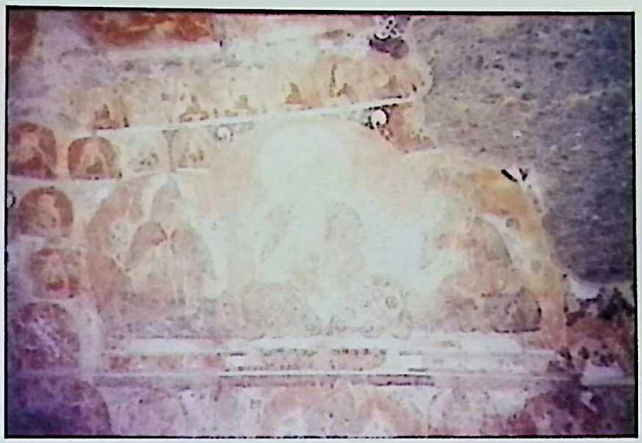


Pl. 20: Amitābha and his retinue



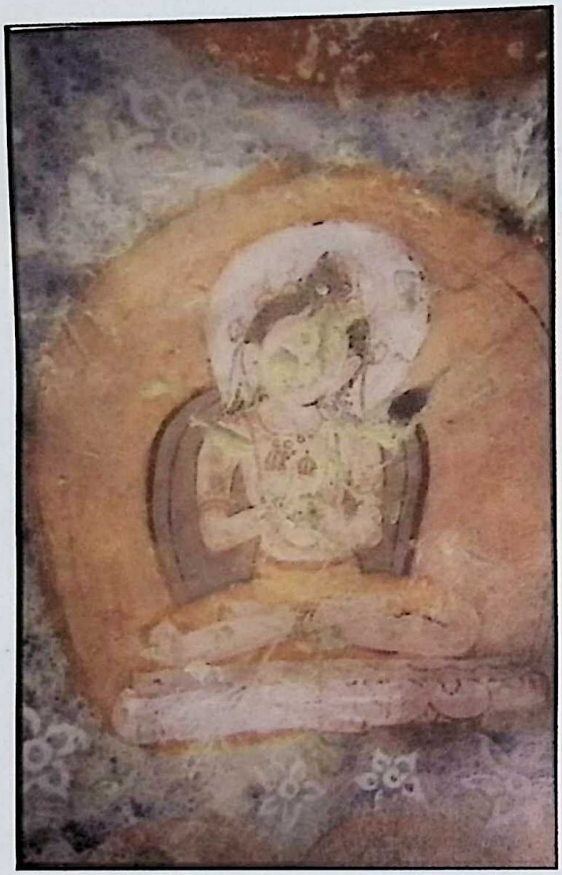
Pl. 21: Sakyapa master

Pl. 22: Sarvavid Vairocana

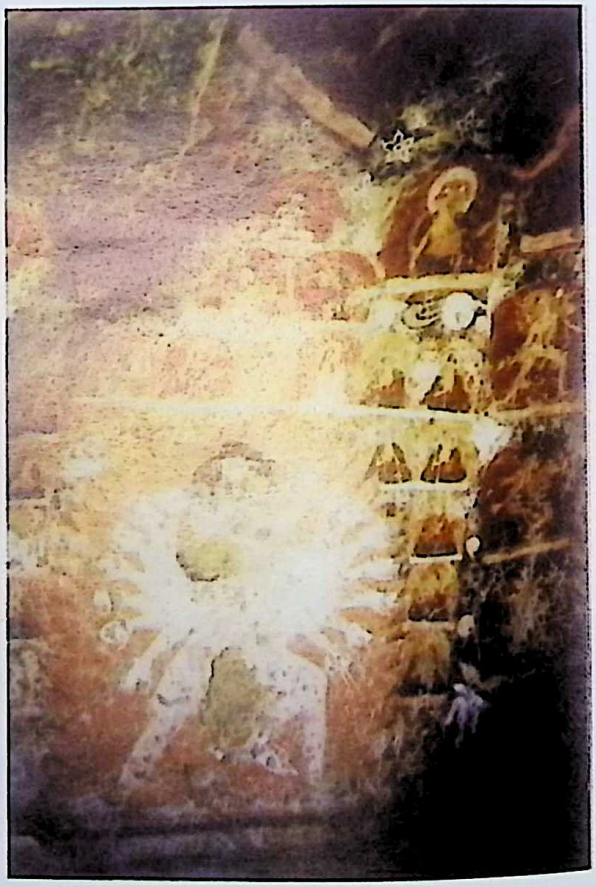


Pl. 23: Sachen Kunga Nyingpo (1092-1158), flanked most probably by Atisa (982-1054), left, and unknown scholar

Pl. 24: Masters of the Sakya Tradition



Pl. 25: Ādi-Buddha Vajradhara with Ghanta and Vajra



Pl. 26: Sixteenarmed Hevajra in Yab-Yum

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He attended over 45 national and international conferences on human rights, development, education, environment, indigenous and tribal peoples' rights, inter-faith dialogue and so on, including World Summit on Racism, Racial Discrimination and Xenophobia (2001, Durban), World Summit on Sustainable Development (2002, Johannesburg) and meetings of UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations, UN Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,

UN Sub-Commission for Human Rights, United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and UN Human Rights Council Experts meeting on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, in the capacity of an expert in indigenous and tribal peoples' issues and a representative of Peace Campaign Group. His various publications focus on Buddhism in the Chittagong hills and the legacy of the *Chākmā* tribe, on Buddhist education and ethics and its global outreach. Presently he researches on Santiniketan's Buddhist Heritage.

Madhu Khanna (D. Phil. Oxon) is at present Professor in Religious/Indic Studies and Director at the Centre for the Study of Comparative Religion & Civilizations, Jamia Millia Islamia University, New Delhi. Her books include: *The Sricakra: History, Ritual and Symbol of Goddess Tripurasundari* (forthcoming); *Sakta Pramoda* of Deva Nandan Singh (edited with an Introduction in English: *The Subtle Body – An Illuminated Tantric Scroll* - Translation with Commentary; Rta – *The Cosmic Order*, Proceedings of an International Seminar (editor); *Yantra: The Tantric Symbol of Cosmic Unity*, London 1989 (repr.) with Translation in German and Italian. *The Tantric Way – Art, Science & Ritual* (co-author), London, 1979), with Translations in German, French and Dutch. She has edited five exhibition catalogues and contributed innumerable papers related to gender, religion and culture in academic publications. She is the Honorary Advisor, Narivada: Gender, Culture & Civilization Network of the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts and founding Trustee ofTantra Foundation, New Delhi

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Suniti Kumar Pathak completed his Master Degree from the University in Calcutta, where he stood first in Pali and also started to learn Tibetan. He was then deputed to George N. Roerich with whom he worked for many years. He then joined Visva-Bharati, Sntiniketan, where Prabodh Chandra Bagchi inspired him. His contributions in multifarious branches of Indo-Tibetan and Buddhist Studies, whether on Tantra, environmental studies or Buddhist ethics, made him internationally recognized. He has published over 200 articles in Journals of national and international repute. His 'Tantra in Tibet' (Patna 2007), has focused on a new

field. So did his translations of Selected Poems of Rabindranath Tagore into Tibetan *(sNyang ngag bdus pa)*. He has been awarded by numerous institutions and was also a former Research Professor of the Asiatic Society, Kolkatta. Although retired since long he continues to teach and supervise in the Department of Indo-Tibetan Studies and the Centre for Buddhist Stuidos, Visva-Bharati, Univeristy Kolkata and Nalanda University.

Dangsong Namgyal Geshe was born in 1970 in Karshod, present-day Ngagchu prefecture, Tibetan Autonomous Region. He completed his secondary education in his home area, before becoming a monk at Lungkhar monastery in 1986. At Lungkhar monastery he practised meditation and studied Bon philosophy with Lungkhar Lopon Drangsong Yungdrung Rinpochee. In 1991 he arrived in India where he first continued his studies at the famous Menri Monastery, near Shimla, seat of His Holiness Menri Tridzin Rinpochee, leader of the Bon tradition. Drangsong Namgyal was fortunate to receive many initiations and advice. Later in 1995 he moved to Sera Je monastery to study the Gelugpa texts on *Madhyamika* and *Prajnaparamita* with the great masters Tsangpa Khanzur Losang Tsering Rinpochee, Chodan Rinpoche and Gyurme Khanzur Losang Deleg Rinpoche. During this period he attended many teachings from His Holiness the Dalai Lama. He also took courses in English language & literature, western scientific methodology and the relationship between science and religion. In 2005 he moved to Triten Norbutse Monastery in Kathmandu, where he studied monastic discipline, cosmology, Tantra and Dzogchen under the guidance of the Bon tradition most revered teacher Yongdzin Lopon Tenzin Namdak Rinpochee. He also started to teach philosophy. In 2011 Drangsong Namgyal finished his studies and was awarded the Geshe degree.

Charles Willemen, M.A. in Classics (Latin and Greek), M.A. and Ph.D. in Oriental Studies, Belgium, where he has been full professor since 1977. He is a life-long member of the Royal Academy of Sciences, and has been visiting professor in Nalanda, Benares, Santiniketan, Beijing, Shanghai, X'ian, Calgary. He has written extensively about the spread of Buddhism from India to East Asia, both in boos and in such periodicals as the Indian Journal of Buddhist Studies, etc.

David Templeman has worked on the writings of Jo nang Taranatha for many years, in particular hagiographical texts dealing with the last years of Buddhism in India. In his retirement he completed a Doctoral thesis titled 'Becoming Indian: a Study of the Life of the 16-17th cent Tibetan Lama Taranatha' in which he explored the broader implications of that spiritual master's life, including the political dimensions. At present he is working on a translation of

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A. Terentyev was born in 1948 in Leningrad, USSR. After graduation from the Faculty of Philosophy of Leningrad University, he worked in the Museum of History of Religions and Atheism, his Ph.D. was received in 1983. His main published works were devoted to Tibetan Buddhist Iconography and Philosophy. Since 1991 he is busy with publishing Buddhist books and journals in the Russian language, in particular he was the Editor of the Russian translations of Je Tsongkhapa's *Lam rim Chen mo*, and now *sNgags rim Chen mo*. He is also teaching at some universities in Russia, Hong Kong, Thailand.

Susanne von der Heide has studied History of Art of Europe and Asia and Cultural Anthropology as main subjects in Germany. Her main areas of interest are the Himalaya-Region, South and Central Asia.

She was curator for education at the Museum of East Asian Art at Cologne from 1988-1995.

From 1995-2001 she has been invited to join UNESCO and has first become Assistant for Quality Control of the Director of the World Heritage Centre of UNESCO in Paris and then she was promoted to the Division of Cultural Heritage, UNESCO, responsible for Special Tasks.

Since 2001 she is the Director of the HimalAsia Foundation. In Nepal she is a Professor for Conservation and Heritage Studies at the Kathmandu University and the Bhaktapur College for Engineering and Architecture

She has written several books and many articles and is one of the editors of the book-series of UNESCO 'World Cultural and Natural Heritage Sites and curated prominent exhibitions in Germany, France and Nepal.

Due date of Return	Due date of Return	Due date of Return

Prof. (Dr.) Andrea Loseries has studied in Paris, Santiniketan, and Vienna from where she received her PH.D. in Ethnology, Tibetology and Buddhist Studies. She is an expert on comparative cultural history and Buddhist Tantrik rituals and arts. She has published over hundred articles and several monographies in German and English, has produced a number of film documentaries, was curator of several exhibitions on Tibetan and contemporary art and convener of ten international conferences. Among her published works are 'Path to Nature's Wisdom: An ecological Dialogue between Alps & Himalayas' (2003), 'Tibetan Mahayoga Tantra (2007), 'Social Significance of Buddhism in the Asian World (2008) and 'Tibetan Art Calendar' (Wisdom Publ. 1998-2007). At present she is senior Professor in the Department of Indo-Tibetan Studies and Director of the Centre for Buddhist Studies, Visva Bharati, Santiniketan, West Bengal.

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Following the intention of Gurudeva Rabindranath Tagore who wanted Santiniketan to be a place 'where the world becomes one nest', in the spring of 2009 scholars and practitioners from Eastern and Western learning and methodology gathered here for an informal meeting on 'Hermeneutics of Tantrik Literature and Culture' mingling with local Bauls admidst Santiniketan's indescribable beauty and artistic excellence.

This volume presents selected papers presented at the 6th International Csoma de Koros Symposium on 'Hermeneutics of Tantrik Literature and Culture' (13th – 15th March 2009) organized by the Department of Indo-Tibetan Studies and the Centre for Buddhist Studies, Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan, The Asiatic Society, Kolkata, and the Csoma de Koros Society, Hungary, as well as additional articles to complement the topic.

From the beginning of Tantrik Studies (Geza Bethlenfalvy) to Tantra as a Counter Culture (Prem Saran) and Sankara's Kundaliniyoga (Minati Kar), the Philosophy and Practice of Buddhist Tantra and its evolution (Chandra Naik, Bhikku Prajnalankar, Andrea Loseries) general and in case studies (Buddhadev Bhattacharya, S.K. Pathak, Madhu Khanna, David Templeman, Charles Willemen, Shedup Tenzin, A. Ternetyev) are discussed, as well as an Introduction to Bon Tantra (Dangsong Namgyal) and explorations into Tantrik Art (Susanne v.d. Heide, Andrea Loseries) complement this volume.

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